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Thomas Carter.



"I AM GOING TO BEGIN, TOM. DON'T YOU WONDER WHY I BUTTER THE INSIDE OF THE BASIN?"
SAID HIS BUSY LITTLE SISTER, "EH, TOM?"

THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

BY
CHARLES DICKENS



WITH FIFTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. BARNARD

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PREFACE.

WHAT is exaggeration to one class of minds and perceptions, is plain truth to another. That which is commonly called a long-sight, perceives in a prospect innumerable features and bearings non-existent to a short-sighted person. I sometimes ask myself whether there may occasionally be a difference of this kind between some writers and some readers; whether it is *always* the writer who colours highly, or whether it is now and then the reader whose eye for colour is a little dull?

On this head of exaggeration I have a positive experience, more curious than the speculation I have just set down. It is this:—I have never touched a character precisely from the life, but some counterpart of that character has incredulously asked me: “Now really, did I ever really, see one like it?”

All the Pecksniff family upon earth are quite agreed, I believe, that Mr. Pecksniff is an exaggeration, and that no such character ever existed. I will not offer any plea on his behalf to so powerful and genteel a body, but will make a remark on the character of Jonas Chuzzlewit.

I conceive that the sordid coarseness and brutality of Jonas would be unnatural, if there had been nothing in his early education, and in the precept and example always before him, to engender and develop the vices that make him odious. But, so born and so bred; admired for that which made him hateful, and justified from his cradle in cunning, treachery, and avarice; I claim him as the legitimate issue of the father upon whom those vices are seen to recoil. And I submit that their recoil upon that old man, in his unhonoured age, is not a mere piece of poetical justice, but is the extreme exposition of a direct truth.

I make this comment, and solicit the reader's attention to it in his or her consideration of this tale, because nothing is more common in real life than a want of profitable reflection on the causes of many vices and crimes that awaken general horror. What is substantially true of families in this respect, is true of a whole commonwealth. As we sow, we reap. Let the reader go into the children's side of any prison in England, or, I grieve to add, of many workhouses, and judge whether those are monsters who disgrace our streets, people our hulks and penitentiaries, and overcrowd our penal colonies, or are creatures whom we have deliberately suffered to be bred for misery and ruin.

The American portion of this story is in no other respect a caricature than as it is an exhibition, for the most part (Mr. Bevan excepted), of a ludicrous side, *only*, of the American character—of that side which was, four-and-twenty years ago, from its nature, the most obtrusive, and the most likely to be seen by such travellers as Young Martin and Mark Tapley. As I

had never, in writing fiction, had any disposition to soften what is ridiculous or wrong at home, so I then hoped that the good-humoured people of the United States would not be generally disposed to quarrel with me for carrying the same usage abroad. I am happy to believe that my confidence in that great nation was not misplaced.

When this book was first published, I was given to understand, by some authorities, that the Watertoast Association and eloquence were beyond all bounds of belief. Therefore I record the fact that all that portion of Martin Chuzzlewit's experiences is a literal paraphrase of some reports of public proceedings in the United States (especially of the proceedings of a certain Brandywine Association), which were printed in the *Times* Newspaper in June and July, 1843—at about the time when I was engaged in writing those parts of the book; and which remain on the file of the *Times* Newspaper, of course.

In all my writings, I hope I have taken every available opportunity of showing the want of sanitary improvements in the neglected dwellings of the poor. Mrs. Sarah Gamp was, four-and-twenty years ago, a fair representation of the hired attendant on the poor in sickness. The hospitals of London were, in many respects, noble Institutions; in others, very defective. I think it not the least among the instances of their mismanagement, that Mrs. Betsey Prig was a fair specimen of a Hospital Nurse; and that the Hospitals, with their means and funds, should have left it to private humanity and enterprise, to enter on an attempt to improve that class of persons—since, greatly improved through the agency of good women.

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POSTSCRIPT.

AT a Public Dinner given to me on Saturday the 18th of April, 1868, in the city of New York, by two hundred representatives of the Press of the United States of America, I made the following observations among others :—

“So much of my voice has lately been heard in the land, that I might have been contented with troubling you no further from my present standing point, were it not a duty with which I henceforth charge myself, not only here but on every suitable occasion, whatsoever and wheresoever, to express my high and grateful sense of my second reception in America, and to bear my honest testimony to the national generosity and magnanimity. Also, to declare how astounded I have been by the amazing changes I have seen around me on every side,—changes moral, changes physical, changes in the amount of land subdued and peopled, changes in the rise of vast new cities, changes in the growth of older cities almost out of recognition, changes in the graces and amenities of life, changes in the Press, without whose advancement no advancement can take place anywhere. Nor am I, believe me, so arrogant as to suppose that in five-and-twenty years there have been no changes in me, and that I had nothing to learn and no extreme impressions to correct when I was here first. And this brings me to a point on which I have, ever since I landed in the United States last November, observed a strict silence, though sometimes tempted to break it, but in reference to which I will, with your good leave, take you into my confidence now. Even the Press, being human, may be sometimes mistaken or misinformed, and I rather think that I have in one or two rare instances observed its information to be not strictly accurate with reference to myself. Indeed, I have, now and again, been more surprised by printed news that I have read of myself, than by any printed news that I have ever read in my present state of existence. Thus, the vigour and perseverance with which I have for some months past been collecting materials for, and hammering away at, a new book on America has much astonished me ; seeing that all that time my declaration has been perfectly well known to my publishers on both sides of the Atlantic, that no consideration on earth would induce me to write one. But what I have intended, what I have resolved upon (and this is the confidence I seek to place in you) is, on my return to England, in my own person, in my own Journal, to bear, for the behoof of my countrymen, such testimony to the gigantic changes in this country as I have hinted at to-night. Also, to record that wherever I have been, in the smallest places equally with the largest, I have been received with unsurpassable politeness, delicacy, sweet temper, hospitality, consideration, and with unsurpassable respect for the privacy daily enforced upon me by the nature of my avocation here and the state of my health. This testimony, so long as I live, and so long as my descendants have any legal right in my books, I shall cause to be republished, as an appendix to every copy of those two books of mine in which I have referred to America. And this I will do and cause to be done, not in mere love and thankfulness, but because I regard it as an act of plain justice and honour.”

I said these words with the greatest earnestness that I could lay upon them, and I repeat them in print here with equal earnestness. So long as this book shall last, I hope that they will form a part of it, and will be fairly read as inseparable from my experiences and impressions of America.

May, 1868.

CHARLES DICKENS.



LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY, CONCERNING THE PEDIGREE OF THE CHUZZLEWIT FAMILY.

AS no lady or gentleman, with any claims to polite breeding, can possibly sympathise with the Chuzzlewit Family without being first assured of the extreme antiquity of the race, it is a great satisfaction to know that it undoubtedly descended in a direct line from Adam and Eve; and was, in the very earliest times, closely connected with MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, I.

the agricultural interest. If it should ever be urged by grudging and malicious persons, that a Chuzzlewit, in any period of the family history, displayed an overweening amount of family pride, surely the weakness will be considered not only pardonable but laudable, when the immense superiority of the house to the rest of mankind, in respect of this its ancient origin, is taken into account.

It is remarkable that as there was, in the oldest family of which we have any record, a murderer and a vagabond, so we never fail to meet, in the records of all old families, with

innumerable repetitions of the same phase of character. Indeed, it may be laid down as a general principle, that the more extended the ancestry, the greater the amount of violence and vagabondism; for in ancient days, those two amusements, combining a wholesome excitement with a promising means of repairing shattered fortunes, were at once the ennobling pursuit and the healthful recreation of the Quality of this land.

Consequently, it is a source of inexpressible comfort and happiness to find, that in various periods of our history, the Chuzzlewits were actively connected with divers slaughterous conspiracies and bloody frays. It is further recorded of them, that being clad from head to heel in steel of proof, they did on many occasions lead their leather-jerkined soldiers to the death, with invincible courage, and afterwards return home gracefully to their relations and friends.

There can be no doubt that at least one Chuzzlewit came over with William the Conqueror. It does not appear that this illustrious ancestor "came over" that monarch, to employ the vulgar phrase, at any subsequent period; inasmuch as the Family do not seem to have been ever greatly distinguished by the possession of landed estate. And it is well known that for the bestowal of that kind of property upon his favourites, the liberality and gratitude of the Norman were as remarkable, as those virtues are usually found to be in great men when they give away what belongs to other people.

Perhaps in this place the history may pause to congratulate itself upon the enormous amount of bravery, wisdom, eloquence, virtue, gentle birth, and true nobility, that appears to have come into England with the Norman Invasion: an amount which the genealogy of every ancient family lends its aid to swell, and which would beyond all question have been found to be just as great, and to the full as prolific in giving birth to long lines of chivalrous descendants, boastful of their origin, even though William the Conqueror had been William the Conquered: a change of circumstances which, it is quite certain, would have made no manner of difference in this respect.

There was unquestionably a Chuzzlewit in the Gunpowder Plot, if indeed the arch-traitor, Fawkes himself, were not a scion of this remarkable stock; as he might easily have been, supposing another Chuzzlewit to have emigrated to Spain in the previous generation, and there intermarried with a Spanish lady by whom he had issue, one olive-complexioned son. This probable conjecture is strengthened, if not abso-

lutely confirmed, by a fact which cannot fail to be interesting to those who are curious in tracing the progress of hereditary tastes through the lives of their unconscious inheritors. It is a notable circumstance that in these later times, many Chuzzlewits, being unsuccessful in other pursuits, have, without the smallest rational hope of enriching themselves, or any conceivable reason, set up as coal-merchants; and have, month after month, continued gloomily to watch a small stock of coals, without, in any one instance, negotiating with a purchaser. The remarkable similarity between this course of proceeding and that adopted by their Great Ancestor beneath the vaults of the Parliament House at Westminster, is too obvious and too full of interest, to stand in need of comment.

It is also clearly proved by the oral traditions of the Family, that there existed, at some one period of its history which is not distinctly stated, a matron of such destructive principles, and so familiarised to the use and composition of inflammatory and combustible engines, that she was called "The Match Maker:" by which nickname and byword she is recognised in the Family legends to this day. Surely there can be no reasonable doubt that this was the Spanish lady: the mother of Chuzzlewit Fawkes.

But there is one other piece of evidence, bearing immediate reference to their close connection with this memorable event in English History, which must carry conviction, even to a mind (if such a mind there be) remaining unconvinced by these presumptive proofs.

There was, within a few years, in the possession of a highly respectable and in every way credible and unimpeachable member of the Chuzzlewit Family (for his bitterest enemy never dared to hint at his being otherwise than a wealthy man), a dark lantern of undoubted antiquity; rendered still more interesting by being, in shape and pattern, extremely like such as are in use at the present day. Now this gentleman, since deceased, was at all times ready to make oath, and did again and again set forth upon his solemn asseveration, that he had frequently heard his grandmother say, when contemplating this venerable relic, "Aye, aye! This was carried by my fourth son on the fifth of November, when he was a Guy Fawkes." These remarkable words wrought (as well they might) a strong impression on his mind, and he was in the habit of repeating them very often. The just interpretation which they bear, and the conclusion to which they lead, are triumphant and irresistible. The old lady, naturally strong-minded, was nevertheless frail and fading; she was

notoriously subject to that confusion of ideas, or, to say the least, of speech, to which age and garrulity are liable. The slight, the very slight confusion, apparent in these expressions, is manifest, and is ludicrously easy of correction. "Aye, aye," quoth she, and it will be observed that no emendation whatever is necessary to be made in these two initiative remarks, "Aye, aye! This lantern was carried by my forefather"—not fourth son, which is preposterous—"on the fifth of November. And *he* was Guy Fawkes." Here we have a remark at once consistent, clear, and natural, and in strict accordance with the character of the speaker. Indeed the anecdote is so plainly susceptible of this meaning, and no other, that it would be hardly worth recording in its original state, were it not a proof of what may be (and very often is), effected not only in historical prose but in imaginative poetry, by the exercise of a little ingenious labour on the part of a commentator.

It has been said that there is no instance in modern times, of a Chuzzlewit having been found on terms of intimacy with the Great. But here again the sneering detractors who weave such miserable figments from their malicious brains, are stricken dumb by evidence. For letters are yet in the possession of various branches of the family, from which it distinctly appears, being stated in so many words, that one Diggory Chuzzlewit was in the habit of perpetually dining with Duke Humphrey. So constantly was he a guest at that nobleman's table, indeed; and so unceasingly were His Grace's hospitality and companionship forced, as it were, upon him; that we find him uneasy, and full of constraint and reluctance: writing his friends to the effect that if they fail to do so and so by bearer, he will have no choice but to dine again with Duke Humphrey: and expressing himself in a very marked and extraordinary manner as one surfeited of High Life and Gracious Company.

It has been rumoured, and it is needless to say the rumour originated in the same base quarters, that a certain male Chuzzlewit, whose birth must be admitted to be involved in some obscurity, was of very mean and low descent. How stands the proof? When the son of that Individual, to whom the secret of his father's birth was supposed to have been communicated by his father in his lifetime, lay upon his death-bed, this question was put to him, in a distinct, solemn, and formal way: "Toby Chuzzlewit, who was your grandfather?" To which he, with his last breath, no less distinctly, solemnly, and formally replied: and his words were taken

down at the time, and signed by six witnesses, each with his name and address in full: "The Lord No Zoo." It may be said—it *has* been said, for human wickedness has no limits—that there is no Lord of that name, and that among the titles which have become extinct, none at all resembling this, in sound even, is to be discovered. But what is the irresistible inference? Rejecting a theory broached by some well-meaning but mistaken persons, that this Mr. Toby Chuzzlewit's grandfather, to judge from his name, must surely have been a Mandarin (which is wholly insupportable, for there is no pretence of his grandmother ever having been out of this country, or of any Mandarin having been in it within some years of his father's birth: except those in the tea-shops, which cannot for a moment be regarded as having any bearing on the question, one way or other), rejecting this hypothesis, is it not manifest that Mr. Toby Chuzzlewit had either received the name imperfectly from his father, or that he had forgotten it, or that he had mispronounced it? and that even at the recent period in question, the Chuzzlewits were connected by a bend sinister, or kind of heraldic over-the-left, with some unknown noble and illustrious House?

From documentary evidence, yet preserved in the family, the fact is clearly established that in the comparatively modern days of the Diggory Chuzzlewit before mentioned, one of its members had attained to very great wealth and influence. Throughout such fragments of his correspondence as have escaped the ravages of the moths (who, in right of their extensive absorption of the contents of deeds and papers, may be called the general registers of the Insect World), we find him making constant reference to an uncle, in respect of whom he would seem to have entertained great expectations, as he was in the habit of seeking to propitiate his favour by presents of plate, jewels, books, watches, and other valuable articles. Thus, he writes on one occasion to his brother in reference to a gravyspoon, the brother's property, which he (Diggory) would appear to have borrowed or otherwise possessed himself of: "Do not be angry, I have parted with it—to my uncle." On another occasion he expresses himself in a similar manner with regard to a child's mug which had been entrusted to him to get repaired. On another occasion he says, "I have bestowed upon that irresistible uncle of mine everything I ever possessed." And that he was in the habit of paying long and constant visits to this gentleman at his mansion, if, indeed, he did not wholly reside there, is manifest from the following sentence:

"With the exception of the suit of clothes I carry about with me, the whole of my wearing apparel is at present at my uncle's." This gentleman's patronage and influence must have been very extensive, for his nephew writes, "His interest is too high"—"It is too much"—"It is tremendous"—and the like. Still it does not appear (which is strange) to have procured for him any lucrative post at court or elsewhere, or to have conferred upon him any other distinction than that which was necessarily included in the countenance of so great a man, and the being invited by him to certain entertainments, so splendid and costly in their nature that he emphatically calls them "Golden Balls."

It is needless to multiply instances of the high and lofty station, and the vast importance of the Chuzzlewits, at different periods. If it came within the scope of reasonable probability that further proofs were required, they might be heaped upon each other until they formed an Alps of testimony, beneath which the boldest scepticism should be crushed and beaten flat. As a goodly tumulus is already collected, and decently batted up above the Family grave, the present chapter is content to leave it as it is: merely adding, by way of a final spadeful, that many Chuzzlewits, both male and female, are proved to demonstration, on the faith of letters written by their own mothers, to have had chiselled noses, undeniable chins, forms that might have served the sculptor for a model, exquisitely turned limbs, and polished foreheads of so transparent a texture that the blue veins might be seen branching off in various directions, like so many roads on an ethereal map. This fact in itself, though it had been a solitary one, would have utterly settled and clenched the business in hand; for it is well known, on the authority of all the books which treat of such matters, that every one of these phenomena, but especially that of the chiselling, are invariably peculiar to, and only make themselves apparent in, persons of the very best condition.

This history, having, to its own perfect satisfaction, (and, consequently, to the full contentment of all its readers,) proved the Chuzzlewits to have had an origin, and to have been at one time or other of an importance which cannot fail to render them highly improving and acceptable acquaintance to all right-minded individuals, may now proceed in earnest with its task. And having shown that they must have had, by reason of their ancient birth, a pretty large share in the foundation and increase of the human family, it will one day become its province to submit, that

such of its members as shall be introduced in these pages, have still many counterparts and prototypes in the Great World about us. At present it contents itself with remarking, in a general way, on this head: Firstly, that it may be safely asserted and yet without implying any direct participation in the Monboddoo doctrine touching the probability of the human race having once been monkeys, that men do play very strange and extraordinary tricks. Secondly, and yet without trenching on the Blumenbach theory as to the descendants of Adam having a vast number of qualities which belong more particularly to swine than to any other class of animals in the creation, that some men certainly are remarkable for taking uncommon good care of themselves.

CHAPTER II.

WHEREIN CERTAIN PERSONS ARE PRESENTED TO THE READER, WITH WHOM HE MAY, IF HE PLEASE, BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED.

IT was pretty late in the autumn of the year, when the declining sun, struggling through the mist which had obscured it all day, looked brightly down upon a little Wiltshire village, within an easy journey of the fair old town of Salisbury.

Like a sudden flash of memory or spirit kindling up the mind of an old man, it shed a glory upon the scene, in which its departed youth and freshness seemed to live again. The wet grass sparkled in the light; the scanty patches of verdure in the hedges—where a few green twigs yet stood together bravely, resisting to the last the tyranny of nipping winds and early frosts—took heart and brightened up; the stream which had been dull and sullen all day long broke out into a cheerful smile; the birds began to chirp and twitter on the naked boughs, as though the hopeful creatures half believed that winter had gone by and spring had come already. The vane upon the tapering spire of the old church glistened from its lofty station in sympathy with the general gladness; and from the ivy-shaded windows such gleams of light shone back upon the glowing sky, that it seemed as if the quiet buildings were the hoarding-place of twenty summers, and all their ruddiness and warmth were stored within.

Even those tokens of the season which emphatically whispered of the coming winter,

graced the landscape, and, for the moment, tinged its livelier features with no oppressive air of sadness. The fallen leaves, with which the ground was strewn, gave forth a pleasant fragrance, and subduing all harsh sounds of distant feet and wheels, created a repose in gentle unison with the light scattering of seed hither and thither by the distant husbandman, and with the noiseless passage of the plough as it turned up the rich brown earth, and wrought a graceful pattern in the stubbled fields. On the motionless branches of some trees, autumn berries hung like clusters of coral beads, as in those fabled orchards where the fruits were jewels; others, stripped of all their garniture, stood, each the centre of its little heap of bright red leaves, watching their slow decay; others again, still wearing theirs, had them all crunched and crackled up, as though they had been burnt; about the stems of some were piled, in ruddy mounds, the apples they had borne that year; while others (hardy evergreens this class) showed somewhat stern and gloomy in their vigour, as charged by nature with the admonition that it is not to her more sensitive and joyous favourites, she grants the longest term of life. Still athwart their darker boughs, the sunbeams struck out paths of deeper gold; and the red light, mantling in among their swarthy branches, used them as foils to set its brightness off, and aid the lustre of the dying day.

A moment, and its glory was no more. The sun went down beneath the long dark lines of hill and cloud which piled up in the west an airy city, wall heaped on wall, and battlement on battlement; the light was all withdrawn; the shining church turned cold and dark; the stream forgot to smile; the birds were silent; and the gloom of winter dwelt on everything.

An evening wind uprose too, and the slighter branches cracked and rattled as they moved in skeleton dances, to its moaning music. The withering leaves no longer quiet, hurried to and fro in search of shelter from its chill pursuit; the labourer unyoked his horses, and with head bent down, trudged briskly home beside them; and from the cottage windows lights began to glance and wink upon the darkening fields.

Then the village forge came out in all its bright importance. The lusty bellows roared Ha ha! to the clear fire which roared in turn, and bade the shining sparks dance gaily to the merry clinking of the hammers on the anvil. The gleaming iron, in its emulation, sparkled too, and shed its red-hot gems around profusely. The strong smith and his men dealt

such strokes upon their work, as made even the melancholy night rejoice, and brought a glow into its dark face as it hovered about the door and windows, peeping curiously in above the shoulders of a dozen loungers. As to this idle company, there they stood, spell-bound by the place, and, casting now and then a glance upon the darkness in their rear, settled their lazy elbows more at ease upon the sill, and leaned a little further in: no more disposed to tear themselves away, than if they had been born to cluster round the blazing hearth like so many crickets.

Out upon the angry wind! how from sighing it began to bluster round the merry forge, banging at the wicket, and grumbling in the chimney as if it bullied the jolly bellows for doing anything to order. And what an impotent swaggerer it was too, for all its noise: for if it had any influence on that hoarse companion, it was but to make him roar his cheerful song the louder, and by consequence to make the fire burn the brighter, and the sparks to dance more gaily yet: at length, they whizzed so madly round and round that it was too much for such a surly wind to bear: so off it flew with a howl: giving the old sign before the alehouse-door, such a cuff as it went, that the Blue Dragon was more rampant than usual ever afterwards, and indeed, before Christmas, reared clean out of his crazy frame.

It was small tyranny for a respectable wind to go wreaking its vengeance on such poor creatures as the fallen leaves, but this wind happening to come up with a great heap of them just after venting its humour on the insulted Dragon, did so disperse and scatter them that they fled away, pell-mell, some here, some there, rolling over each other, whirling round and round upon their thin edges, taking frantic flights into the air, and playing all manner of extraordinary gambols in the extremity of their distress. Nor was this enough for its malicious fury: for not content with driving them abroad, it charged small parties of them and hunted them into the wheelwright's saw-pit, and below the planks and timbers in the yard, and scattering the sawdust in the air, it looked for them underneath, and when it did meet with any, whew! how it drove them on and followed at their heels!

The scared leaves only flew the faster for all this, and a giddy chase it was: for they got into unfrequented places, where there was no outlet, and where their pursuer kept them eddying round and round at his pleasure; and they crept under the eaves of houses, and clung tightly to the sides of hayricks, like bats; and

tore in at open chamber windows, and covered close to hedges; and in short went anywhere for safety. But the oddest feat they achieved was, to take advantage of the sudden opening of Mr. Pecksniff's front-door, to dash wildly into his passage; whither the wind following close upon them, and finding the back-door open, incontinently blew out the lighted candle held by Miss Pecksniff, and slammed the front-door against Mr. Pecksniff who was at that moment entering, with such violence, that in the twinkling of an eye he lay on his back at the bottom of the steps. Being by this time weary of such trifling performances, the boisterous rover hurried away rejoicing, roaring over moor and meadow, hill and flat, until it got out to sea, where it met with other winds similarly disposed, and made a night of it.

In the meantime Mr. Pecksniff, having received, from a sharp angle in the bottom step but one, that sort of knock on the head which lights up for the patient's entertainment, an imaginary general illumination of very bright short-sixes, lay placidly staring at his own street-door. And it would seem to have been more suggestive in its aspect than street-doors usually are; for he continued to lie there, rather a lengthy and unreasonable time, without so much as wondering whether he was hurt or no: neither when Miss Pecksniff inquired through the key-hole in a shrill voice, which might have belonged to a wind in its teens, "Who's there?" did he make any reply: nor, when Miss Pecksniff opened the door again, and shading the candle with her hand, peered out, and looked provokingly round him, and about him, and over him, and everywhere but at him, did he offer any remark, or indicate in any manner the least hint of a desire to be picked up.

"I see you," cried Miss Pecksniff, to the ideal inflictor of a runaway knock. "You'll catch it, sir!"

Still Mr. Pecksniff, perhaps from having caught it already, said nothing.

"You're round the corner now," cried Miss Pecksniff. She said it at a venture, but there was appropriate matter in it too; for Mr. Pecksniff, being in the act of extinguishing the candles before mentioned pretty rapidly, and of reducing the number of brass knobs on his street-door from four or five hundred (which had previously been juggling of their own accord before his eyes in a very novel manner) to a dozen or so, might in one sense have been said to be coming round the corner, and just turning it.

With a sharply delivered warning relative to the cage and the constable, and the stocks and

the gallows, Miss Pecksniff was about to close the door again, when Mr. Pecksniff (being still at the bottom of the steps) raised himself on one elbow, and sneezed.

"That voice!" cried Miss Pecksniff, "my parent!"

At this exclamation, another Miss Pecksniff bounced out of the parlour: and the two Miss Pecksniffs, with many incoherent expressions, dragged Mr. Pecksniff into an upright posture.

"Pa!" they cried in concert. "Pa! Speak, Pa! Do not look so wild, my dearest Pa!"

But as a gentleman's looks, in such a case of all others, are by no means under his own control, Mr. Pecksniff continued to keep his mouth and his eyes very wide open, and to drop his lower jaw, somewhat after the manner of a toy nut-cracker: and as his hat had fallen off, and his face was pale, and his hair erect, and his coat muddy, the spectacle he presented was so very doleful, that neither of the Miss Pecksniffs could repress an involuntary screech.

"That'll do," said Mr. Pecksniff. "I'm better."

"He's come to himself!" cried the youngest Miss Pecksniff.

"He speaks again!" exclaimed the eldest.

With these joyful words they kissed Mr. Pecksniff on either cheek; and bore him into the house. Presently, the youngest Miss Pecksniff ran out again to pick up his hat, his brown paper parcel, his umbrella, his gloves, and other small articles: and that done, and the door closed, both young ladies applied themselves to tending Mr. Pecksniff's wounds in the back-parlour.

They were not very serious in their nature: being limited to abrasions on what the eldest Miss Pecksniff called "the knobby parts" of her parent's anatomy, such as his knees and elbows, and to the development of an entirely new organ, unknown to phrenologists, on the back of his head. These injuries having been comforted externally, with patches of pickled brown paper, and Mr. Pecksniff having been comforted internally, with some stiff brandy-and-water, the eldest Miss Pecksniff sat down to make the tea, which was all ready. In the meantime the youngest Miss Pecksniff brought from the kitchen a smoking dish of ham and eggs, and, setting the same before her father, took up her station on a low stool at his feet: thereby bringing her eyes on a level with the teaboard.

It must not be inferred from this position of humility, that the youngest Miss Pecksniff was so young as to be, as one may say, forced to sit

upon a stool, by reason of the shortness of her legs. Miss Pecksniff sat upon a stool, because of her simplicity and innocence, which were very great: very great. Miss Pecksniff sat upon a stool, because she was all girlishness, and playfulness, and wildness, and kittenish buoyancy. She was the most arch and at the same time the most artless creature, was the youngest Miss Pecksniff, that you can possibly imagine. It was her great charm. She was too fresh and guileless, and too full of child-like vivacity, was the youngest Miss Pecksniff, to wear combs in her hair, or to turn it up, or to frizzle it, or braid it. She wore it in a crop, a loosely flowing crop, which had so many rows of curls in it, that the top row was only one curl. Moderately buxom was her shape, and quite womanly too; but sometimes—yes, sometimes—she even wore a pinafore; and how charming *that* was! Oh! she was indeed a “gushing thing” (as a young gentleman had observed in verse, in the Poet’s-corner of a provincial newspaper), was the youngest Miss Pecksniff!

Mr. Pecksniff was a moral man: a grave man, a man of noble sentiments, and speech: and he had had her christened Mercy. Mercy! oh, what a charming name for such a pure-souled Being as the youngest Miss Pecksniff! Her sister’s name was Charity. There was a good thing! Mercy and Charity! And Charity, with her fine strong sense, and her mild, yet not reproachful gravity, was so well named, and did so well set off and illustrate her sister! What a pleasant sight was that, the contrast they presented: to see each loved and loving one sympathising with, and devoted to, and leaning on, and yet correcting and counter-checking, and, as it were, antidoting, the other! To behold each damsel, in her very admiration of her sister, setting up in business for herself on an entirely different principle, and announcing no connection with over-the-way, and if the quality of goods at that establishment don’t please you, you are respectfully invited to favour ME with a call! And the crowning circumstance of the whole delightful catalogue was, that both the fair creatures were so utterly unconscious of all this! They had no idea of it. They no more thought or dreamed of it, than Mr. Pecksniff did. Nature played them off against each other: *they* had no hand in it, the two Miss Pecksniffs.

It has been remarked that Mr. Pecksniff was a moral man. So he was. Perhaps there never was a more moral man than Mr. Pecksniff: especially in his conversation and correspondence. It was once said of him by a homely

admirer, that he had a Fortunatus’s purse of good sentiments in his inside. In this particular he was like the girl in the fairy tale, except that if they were not actual diamonds which fell from his lips, they were the very brightest paste, and shone prodigiously. He was a most exemplary man: fuller of virtuous precepts than a copy-book. Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there: but these were his enemies; the shadows cast by his brightness; that was all. His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it. You looked over a very low fence of white cravat (whereof no man had ever beheld the tie, for he fastened it behind), and there it lay, a valley between two jutting heights of collar, serene and whiskerless before you. It seemed to say, on the part of Mr. Pecksniff, “There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen, all is peace, a holy calm pervades me.” So did his hair, just grizzled with an iron-grey, which was all brushed off his forehead, and stood bolt upright, or slightly drooped in kindred action with his heavy eyelids. So did his person, which was sleek though free from corpulency. So did his manner, which was soft and oily. In a word, even his plain black suit, and state of widower, and dangling double eye-glass, all tended to the same purpose, and cried aloud, “Behold the moral Pecksniff!”

The brazen plate upon the door (which being Mr. Pecksniff’s, could not lie) bore this inscription, “PECKSNIFF, ARCHITECT,” to which Mr. Pecksniff, on his cards of business, added, “AND LAND SURVEYOR.” In one sense, and only one, he may be said to have been a Land Surveyor on a pretty large scale, as an extensive prospect lay stretched out before the windows of his house. Of his architectural doings, nothing was clearly known, except that he had never designed or built anything; but it was generally understood that his knowledge of the science was almost awful in its profundity.

Mr. Pecksniff’s professional engagements, indeed, were almost, if not entirely, confined to the reception of pupils; for the collection of rents, with which pursuit he occasionally varied and relieved his graver toils, can hardly be said to be a strictly architectural employment. His genius lay in ensnaring parents and guardians, and pocketing premiums. A young gentleman’s premium being paid, and the young gentleman come to Mr. Pecksniff’s house, Mr. Pecksniff borrowed his case of mathematical instruments (if silver-mounted or otherwise valuable); entertained him, from that moment, to consider him-

self one of the family ; complimented him highly on his parents or guardians, as the case might be ; and turned him loose in a spacious room on the two-pair front ; where, in the company of certain drawing-boards, parallel rulers, very stiff-legged compasses, and two, or perhaps three, other young gentlemen, he improved himself, for three or five years, according to his articles, in making elevations of Salisbury Cathedral from every possible point of sight ; and in constructing in the air a vast quantity of Castles, Houses of Parliament, and other Public Buildings. Perhaps in no place in the world were so many gorgeous edifices of this class erected as under Mr. Pecksniff's auspices ; and if but one twentieth part of the churches which were built in that front room, with one or other of the Miss Pecksniffs at the altar in the act of marrying the architect, could only be made available by the parliamentary commissioners, no more churches would be wanted for at least five centuries.

"Even the worldly goods of which we have just disposed," said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing round the table when he had finished, "even cream, sugar, tea, toast, ham,—"

"And eggs," suggested Charity in a low voice.

"And eggs," said Mr. Pecksniff, "even they have their moral. See how they come and go ! Every pleasure is transitory. We can't even eat, long. If we indulge in harmless fluids, we get the dropsy ; if in exciting liquids, we get drunk. What a soothing reflection is that !"

"Don't say *we* get drunk, Pa," urged the eldest Miss Pecksniff.

"When I say, we, my dear," returned the father, "I mean mankind in general ; the human race, considered as a body, and not as individuals. There is nothing personal in morality, my love. Even such a thing as this," said Mr. Pecksniff, laying the forefinger of his left hand upon the brown paper patch on the top of his head, "slight casual baldness though it be, reminds us that we are but"—he was going to say "worms," but recollecting that worms were not remarkable for heads of hair, he substituted "flesh and blood."

"Which," cried Mr. Pecksniff after a pause, during which he seemed to have been casting about for a new moral, and not quite successfully, "which is also very soothing. Mercy, my dear, stir the fire and throw up the cinders."

The young lady obeyed, and having done so resumed her stool, reposed one arm upon her father's knee, and laid her blooming cheek upon it. Miss Charity drew her chair nearer the fire, as one prepared for conversation, and looked towards her father.

"Yes," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a short pause, during which he had been silently smiling, and shaking his head at the fire—"I have again been fortunate in the attainment of my object. A new inmate will very shortly come among us."

"A youth, papa?" asked Charity.

"Ye-es, a youth," said Mr. Pecksniff. "He will avail himself of the eligible opportunity which now offers, for uniting the advantages of the best practical architectural education, with the comforts of a home, and the constant association with some who (however humble their sphere, and limited their capacity) are not unmindful of their moral responsibilities."

"Oh Pa !" cried Mercy, holding up her finger archly. "See advertisement !"

"Playful—playful warbler," said Mr. Pecksniff. It may be observed in connexion with his calling his daughter "a warbler," that she was not at all vocal, but that Mr. Pecksniff was in the frequent habit of using any word that occurred to him as having a good sound, and rounding a sentence well, without much care for its meaning. And he did this so boldly, and in such an imposing manner, that he would sometimes stagger the wisest people with his eloquence, and make them gasp again.

His enemies asserted, by the way, that a strong trustfulness in sounds and forms, was the master-key to Mr. Pecksniff's character.

"Is he handsome, Pa?" inquired the younger daughter.

"Silly Merry !" said the eldest : Merry being fond for Mercy. "What is the premium, Pa ? tell us that."

"Oh good gracious, Cherry !" cried Miss Mercy, holding up her hands with the most winning giggle in the world, "what a mercenary girl you are ! oh you naughty, thoughtful, prudent thing !"

It was perfectly charming, and worthy of the Pastoral age, to see how the two Miss Pecksniffs slapped each other after this, and then subsided into an embrace expressive of their different dispositions.

"He is well-looking," said Mr. Pecksniff, slowly and distinctly : "well-looking enough. I do not positively expect any immediate premium with him."

Notwithstanding their different natures, both Charity and Mercy concurred in opening their eyes uncommonly wide at this announcement, and in looking for the moment as blank as if their thoughts had actually had a direct bearing on the main-chance.

"But what of that !" said Mr. Pecksniff, still smiling at the fire. "There is disinterestedness

in the world, I hope? We are not all arrayed in two opposite ranks: the *offensive* and the *defensive*. Some few there are who walk between; who help the needy as they go; and take no part with either side? Umph?"

There was something in these morsels of philanthropy which reassured the sisters. They exchanged glances, and brightened very much.

"Oh! let us not be for ever calculating, devising, and plotting for the future," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling more and more, and looking at the fire as a man might, who was cracking a

joke with it: "I am weary of such arts. If our inclinations are but good and open-hearted, let us gratify them boldly, though they bring upon us, Loss instead of Profit. Eh, Charity?"

Glancing towards his daughters for the first time since he had begun these reflections, and seeing that they both smiled, Mr. Pecksniff eyed them for an instant so jocosely (though still with a kind of saintly waggishness) that the younger one was moved to sit upon his knee forthwith, put her fair arms round his neck, and kiss him twenty times. During the whole of



"MR. PECKSNIFF, LOOKING SWEETLY OVER THE HALF-DOOR OF THE BAR, AND INTO THE VISTA OF SNUG PRIVACY BEYOND, MURMURED 'GOOD EVENING, MRS. LUPIN.'"

this affectionate display she laughed to a most immoderate extent: in which hilarious indulgence even the prudent Cherry joined.

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Pecksniff, pushing his latest-born away, and running his fingers through his hair, as he resumed his tranquil face. "What folly is this! Let us take heed how we laugh without reason, lest we cry with it. What is the domestic news since yesterday? John Westlock is gone, I hope?"

"Indeed no," said Charity.

"And why not?" returned her father. "His term expired yesterday. And his box was

packed, I know; for I saw it, in the morning, standing in the hall."

"He slept last night at the Dragon," returned the young lady, "and had Mr. Pinch to dine with him. They spent the evening together, and Mr. Pinch was not home till very late."

"And when I saw him on the stairs this morning, Pa," said Mercy with her usual sprightliness, "he looked, oh goodness, such a monster! with his face all manner of colours, and his eyes as dull as if they had been boiled, and his head aching dreadfully, I am sure from the look of it, and his clothes smelling, oh it's impossible to

say how strong, of"—here the young lady shuddered—"of smoke and punch."

"Now I think," said Mr. Pecksniff with his accustomed gentleness, though still with the air of one who suffered under injury without complaint, "I think Mr. Pinch might have done better than choose for his companion one who, at the close of a long intercourse, had endeavoured, as he knew, to wound my feelings. I am not quite sure that this was delicate in Mr. Pinch. I am not quite sure that this was kind in Mr. Pinch. I will go further and say, I am not quite sure that this was even ordinarily grateful in Mr. Pinch."

"But what can any one expect from Mr. Pinch!" cried Charity, with as strong and scornful an emphasis on the name as if it would have given her unspeakable pleasure to express it, in an acted charade, on the calf of that gentleman's leg.

"Ay, ay," returned her father, raising his hand mildly: "it is very well to say what can we expect from Mr. Pinch, but Mr. Pinch is a fellow-creature, my dear; Mr. Pinch is an item in the vast total of humanity, my love; and we have a right, it is our duty, to expect in Mr. Pinch some development of those better qualities, the possession of which in our own persons inspires our humble self-respect. No," continued Mr. Pecksniff. "No! Heaven forbid that I should say, nothing can be expected from Mr. Pinch; or that I should say, nothing can be expected from any man alive (even the most degraded, which Mr. Pinch is not, no really); but Mr. Pinch has disappointed me: he has hurt me: I think a little the worse of him on this account, but not of human nature. Oh no, no!"

"Hark!" said Miss Charity, holding up her finger, as a gentle rap was heard at the street-door. "There is the creature! Now mark my words, he has come back with John Westlock for his box, and is going to help him to take it to the mail. Only mark my words, if that isn't his intention!"

Even as she spoke, the box appeared to be in progress of conveyance from the house, but after a brief murmuring of question and answer, it was put down again, and somebody knocked at the parlour door.

"Come in!" cried Mr. Pecksniff—not severely; only virtuously. "Come in!"

An ungainly, awkward-looking man, extremely short-sighted, and prematurely bald, availed himself of this permission; and seeing that Mr. Pecksniff sat with his back towards him, gazing at the fire, stood hesitating, with the door in his

hand. He was far from handsome certainly; and was dressed in a snuff-coloured suit, of an uncouth make at the best, which, being shrunken with long wear, was twisted and tortured into all kinds of odd shapes; but notwithstanding his attire, and his clumsy figure, which a great stoop in his shoulders, and a ludicrous habit he had of thrusting his head forward, by no means redeemed, one would not have been disposed (unless Mr. Pecksniff said so) to consider him a bad fellow by any means. He was perhaps about thirty, but he might have been almost any age between sixteen and sixty: being one of those strange creatures who never decline into an ancient appearance, but look their oldest when they are very young, and get it over at once.

Keeping his hand upon the lock of the door, he glanced from Mr. Pecksniff to Mercy, from Mercy to Charity, and from Charity to Mr. Pecksniff again, several times; but the young ladies being as intent upon the fire as their father was, and neither of the three taking any notice of him, he was fain to say, at last,

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Mr. Pecksniff: I beg your pardon for intruding: but—"

"No intrusion, Mr. Pinch," said that gentleman very sweetly, but without looking round. "Pray be seated, Mr. Pinch. Have the goodness to shut the door, Mr. Pinch, if you please."

"Certainly, sir," said Pinch: not doing so, however, but holding it rather wider open than before, and beckoning nervously to somebody without: "Mr. Westlock, sir, hearing that you were come home—"

"Mr. Pinch, Mr. Pinch!" said Pecksniff, wheeling his chair about, and looking at him with an aspect of the deepest melancholy, "I did not expect this from you. I have not deserved this from you!"

"No, but upon my word, sir—" urged Pinch.

"The less you say, Mr. Pinch," interposed the other, "the better. I utter no complaint. Make no defence."

"No, but do have the goodness, sir," cried Pinch, with great earnestness, "if you please. Mr. Westlock, sir, going away for good and all, wishes to leave none but friends behind him. Mr. Westlock and you, sir, had a little difference the other day: you have had many little differences."

"Little differences!" cried Charity.

"Little differences!" echoed Mercy.

"My loves!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with the same serene upraising of his hand; "my dears!" After a solemn pause he meekly bowed to Mr.

Pinch, as who should say, "Proceed;" but Mr. Pinch was so very much at a loss how to resume, and looked so helplessly at the two Miss Pecksniffs, that the conversation would most probably have terminated there, if a good-looking youth, newly arrived at man's estate, had not stepped forward from the doorway and taken up the thread of the discourse.

"Come, Mr. Pecksniff," he said with a smile, "don't let there be any ill-blood between us, pray. I am sorry we have ever differed, and extremely sorry I have ever given you offence. Bear me no ill-will at parting, sir."

"I bear," answered Mr. Pecksniff mildly, "no ill-will to any man on earth."

"I told you he didn't," said Pinch in an under tone; "I knew he didn't! He always says he don't."

"Then you will shake hands, sir?" cried Westlock, advancing a step or two, and bespeaking Mr. Pinch's close attention by a glance.

"Umph!" said Mr. Pecksniff, in his most winning tone.

"You will shake hands, sir."

"No, John," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a calmness quite ethereal; "no, I will not shake hands, John. I have forgiven you. I had already forgiven you, even before you ceased to reproach and taunt me. I have embraced you in the spirit, John, which is better than shaking hands."

"Pinch," said the youth, turning towards him, with a hearty disgust of his late master, "what did I tell you?"

Poor Pinch looked down uneasily at Mr. Pecksniff, whose eye was fixed upon him as it had been from the first: and looking up at the ceiling again, made no reply.

"As to your forgiveness, Mr. Pecksniff," said the youth, "I'll not have it upon such terms. I won't be forgiven."

"Won't you, John?" retorted Mr. Pecksniff, with a smile. "You must. You can't help it. Forgiveness is a high quality; an exalted virtue; far above *your* control or influence, John. *I will* forgive you. You cannot move me to remember any wrong you have ever done me, John."

"Wrong!" cried the other, with all the heat and impetuosity of his age. "Here's a pretty fellow! Wrong! Wrong I have done him! He'll not even remember the five hundred pounds he had with me under false pretences; or the seventy pounds a-year for board and lodging that would have been dear at seventeen! Here's a martyr!"

"Money, John," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is the root of all evil. I grieve to see that it is already bearing evil fruit in you. But I will not remem-

ber its existence. I will not even remember the conduct of that misguided person"—and here, although he spoke like one at peace with all the world, he used an emphasis that plainly said 'I have my eye upon the rascal now'—"that misguided person who has brought you here to-night, seeking to disturb (it is a happiness to say, in vain) the heart's repose and peace of one who would have shed his dearest blood to serve him."

The voice of Mr. Pecksniff trembled as he spoke, and sobs were heard from his daughters. Sounds floated on the air, moreover, as if two spirit voices had exclaimed: one, "Beast!" the other "Savage!"

"Forgiveness," said Mr. Pecksniff, "entire and pure forgiveness is not incompatible with a wounded heart; perchance when the heart *is* wounded, it becomes a greater virtue. With my breast still wrung and grieved to its inmost core by the ingratitude of that person, I am proud and glad to say, that I forgive him. Nay! I beg," cried Mr. Pecksniff, raising his voice, as Pinch appeared about to speak, "I beg that individual not to offer a remark: he will truly oblige me by not uttering one word: just now. I am not sure that I am equal to the trial. In a very short space of time, I shall have sufficient fortitude, I trust, to converse with him as if these events had never happened. But not," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning round again towards the fire, and waving his hand in the direction of the door, "not now."

"Bah!" cried John Westlock, with the utmost disgust and disdain the monosyllable is capable of expressing. "Ladies, good evening. Come, Pinch, it's not worth thinking of. I was right and you were wrong. That's a small matter; you'll be wiser another time."

So saying, he clapped that dejected companion on the shoulder, turned upon his heel, and walked out into the passage, whither poor Mr. Pinch, after lingering irresolutely in the parlour for a few seconds, expressing in his countenance the deepest mental misery and gloom, followed him. Then they took up the box between them, and sallied out to meet the mail.

That fleet conveyance passed, every night, the corner of a lane at some distance; towards which point they bent their steps. For some minutes they walked along in silence, until at length young Westlock burst into a loud laugh, and at intervals into another, and another. Still there was no response from his companion.

"I'll tell you what, Pinch!" he said, abruptly, after another lengthened silence—"You haven't

half enough of the devil in you. Half enough! You haven't any."

"Well!" said Pinch with a sigh, "I don't know, I'm sure. It's a compliment to say so. If I haven't, I suppose I'm all the better for it."

"All the better!" repeated his companion tartly: "All the worse, you mean to say."

"And yet," said Pinch, pursuing his own thoughts and not this last remark on the part of his friend, "I must have a good deal of what you call the devil in me, too, or how could I make Pecksniff so uncomfortable? I wouldn't have occasioned him so much distress—don't laugh, please—for a mine of money: and Heaven knows I could find good use for it too, John. How grieved he was!"

"*He* grieved!" returned the other.

"Why didn't you observe that the tears were almost starting out of his eyes!" cried Pinch. "Bless my soul, John, is it nothing to see a man moved to that extent and know one's self to be the cause! And did you hear him say that he could have shed his blood for me?"

"Do you *want* any blood shed for you?" returned his friend, with considerable irritation. "Does he shed anything for you that you *do* want? Does he shed employment for you, instruction for you, pocket-money for you? Does he shed even legs of mutton for you in any decent proportion to potatoes and garden stuff?"

"I am afraid," said Pinch, sighing again, "that I'm a great eater: I can't disguise from myself that I'm a great eater. Now you know that, John."

"*You* a great eater!" retorted his companion, with no less indignation than before. "How do you know you are?"

There appeared to be forcible matter in this inquiry, for Mr. Pinch only repeated in an under-tone that he had a strong misgiving on the subject, and that he greatly feared he was:

"Besides, whether I am or no," he added, "that has little or nothing to do with his thinking me ungrateful. John, there is scarcely a sin in the world that is in my eyes such a crying one as ingratitude; and when he taxes me with that, and believes me to be guilty of it, he makes me miserable and wretched."

"Do you think he don't know that?" returned the other scornfully. "But come, Pinch, before I say anything more to you, just run over the reasons you have for being grateful to him at all, will you? Change hands first, for the box is heavy. That'll do. Now go on."

"In the first place," said Pinch, "he took me as his pupil for much less than he asked."

"Well," rejoined his friend, perfectly unmoved by this instance of generosity. "What in the second place?"

"What in the second place!" cried Pinch, in a sort of desperation, "why everything in the second place. My poor old grandmother died happy to think that she had put me with such an excellent man. I have grown up in his house, I am in his confidence, I am his assistant, he allows me a salary: when his business improves, my prospects are to improve too. All this, and a great deal more, is in the second place. And in the very prologue and preface to the first place, John, you must consider this, which nobody knows better than I: that I was born for much plainer and poorer things, that I am not a good hand at his kind of business, and have no talent for it, or indeed for anything else but odds and ends that are of no use or service to anybody."

He said this with so much earnestness, and in a tone so full of feeling, that his companion instinctively changed his manner as he sat down on the box (they had by this time reached the finger-post at the end of the lane); motioned him to sit down beside him; and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"I believe you are one of the best fellows in the world," he said, "Tom Pinch."

"Not at all," rejoined Tom. "If you only knew Pecksniff as well as I do, you might say it of him, indeed, and say it truly."

"I'll say anything of him, you like," returned the other, "and not another word to his disparagement."

"It's for my sake, then; not his, I am afraid," said Pinch, shaking his head gravely.

"For whose you please, Tom, so that it does please you. Oh! He's a famous fellow! *He* never scraped and clawed into his pouch all your poor grandmother's hard savings—she was a housekeeper, wasn't she, Tom?"

"Yes," said Mr. Pinch, nursing one of his large knees, and nodding his head: "a gentleman's housekeeper."

"*He* never scraped and clawed into his pouch all her hard savings; dazzling her with prospects of your happiness and advancement, which he knew (and no man better) never would be realised! *He* never speculated and traded on her pride in you, and her having educated you, and on her desire that you at least should live to be a gentleman. Not he, Tom!"

"No," said Tom, looking into his friend's face, as if he were a little doubtful of his meaning; "of course not."

"So I say," returned the youth, "of course

he never did. *He* didn't take less than he had asked, because that less was all she had, and more than he expected: not he, Tom! He doesn't keep you as his assistant because you are of any use to him; because your wonderful faith in his pretensions is of inestimable service in all his mean disputes; because your honesty reflects honesty on him; because your wandering about this little place all your spare hours, reading in ancient books, and foreign tongues, gets noised abroad, even as far as Salisbury, making of him, Pecksniff the master, a man of learning and of vast importance. *He* gets no credit from you, Tom, not he."

"Why, of course he don't," said Pinch, gazing at his friend with a more troubled aspect than before. "Pecksniff get credit from *me!* Well!"

"Don't I say that it's ridiculous," rejoined the other, "even to think of such a thing?"

"Why, it's madness," said Tom.

"Madness!" returned young Westlock. "Certainly, it's madness. Who but a madman would suppose he cares to hear it said on Sundays, that the volunteer who plays the organ in the church, and practises on summer evenings in the dark, is Mr. Pecksniff's young man, eh, Tom? Who but a madman would suppose it is the game of such a man as he, to have his name in everybody's mouth, connected with the thousand useless odds and ends you do (and which, of course, he taught you), eh, Tom? Who but a madman would suppose you advertise him hereabouts, much cheaper and much better than a chalker on the walls could, eh, Tom? As well might one suppose that he doesn't on all occasions pour out his whole heart and soul to you; that he doesn't make you a very liberal and indeed rather an extravagant allowance; or, to be more wild and monstrous still, if that be possible, as well might one suppose," and here, at every word, he struck him lightly on the breast, "that Pecksniff traded in your nature, and that your nature was, to be timid and distrustful of yourself, and trustful of all other men, but most of all, of him who least deserves it. There would be madness, Tom!"

Mr. Pinch had listened to all this with looks of bewilderment, which seemed to be in part occasioned by the matter of his companion's speech, and in part by his rapid and vehement manner. Now that he had come to a close, he drew a very long breath; and gazing wistfully in his face as if he were unable to settle in his own mind what expression it wore, and were desirous to draw from it as good a clue to his real meaning as it was possible to obtain in the

dark, was about to answer, when the sound of the mail guard's horn came cheerily upon their ears, putting an immediate end to the conference: greatly as it seemed to the satisfaction of the younger man, who jumped up briskly, and gave his hand to his companion.

"Both hands, Tom. I shall write to you from London, mind!"

"Yes," said Pinch. "Yes. Do, please. Good bye. Good bye. I can hardly believe you're going. It seems, now, but yesterday that you came. Good bye! my dear old fellow!"

John Westlock returned his parting words with no less heartiness of manner, and sprang up to his seat upon the roof. Off went the mail at a canter down the dark road: the lamps gleaming brightly, and the horn awakening all the echoes, far and wide.

"Go your ways," said Pinch, apostrophising the coach: "I can hardly persuade myself but you're alive, and are some great monster who visits this place at certain intervals, to bear my friends away into the world. You're more exulting and rampant than usual to-night, I think: and you may well crow over your prize; for he is a fine lad, an ingenuous lad, and has but one fault that I know of: he don't mean it, but he is most cruelly unjust to Pecksniff!"

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH CERTAIN OTHER PERSONS ARE INTRODUCED;
ON THE SAME TERMS AS IN THE LAST CHAPTER.

MENTION has been already made more than once, of a certain Dragon who swung and creaked complainingly before the village ale-house door. A faded, and an ancient dragon he was; and many a wintry storm of rain, snow, sleet, and hail, had changed his colour from a gaudy blue to a faint lack-lustre shade of grey. But there he hung; rearing in a state of monstrous imbecility, on his hind legs; waxing, with every month that passed, so much more dim and shapeless, that as you gazed at him on one side of the sign-board it seemed as if he must be gradually melting through it, and coming out upon the other.

He was a courteous and considerate dragon too; or had been in his distincter days; for in the midst of his rampant feebleness, he kept one of his fore paws near his nose, as though he would say, "Don't mind me—it's only my fun;"

while he held out the other, in polite and hospitable entreaty. Indeed it must be conceded to the whole brood of dragons of modern times, that they have made a great advance in civilisation and refinement. They no longer demand a beautiful virgin for breakfast every morning, with as much regularity as any tame single gentleman expects his hot roll, but rest content with the society of idle bachelors and roving married men: and they are now remarkable rather for holding aloof from the softer sex and discouraging their visits (especially on Saturday nights), than for rudely insisting on their company without any reference to their inclinations, as they are known to have done in days of yore.

Nor is this tribute to the reclaimed animals in question, so wide a digression into the realms of Natural History, as it may, at first sight, appear to be: for the present business of these pages is with the dragon who had his retreat in Mr. Pecksniff's neighbourhood, and that courteous animal being already on the carpet, there is nothing in the way of its immediate transaction.

For many years, then, he had swung and creaked, and flapped himself about, before the two windows of the best bedroom in that house of entertainment to which he lent his name; but never in all his swinging, creaking, and flapping, had there been such a stir within its dingy precincts, as on the evening next after that upon which the incidents detailed in the last chapter, occurred; when there was such a hurrying up and down stairs of feet, such a glancing of lights, such a whispering of voices, such a smoking and sputtering of wood newly lighted in a damp chimney, such an airing of linen, such a scorching smell of hot warming-pans, such a domestic bustle and to-do, in short, as never dragon, griffin, unicorn, or other animal of that species presided over, since they first began to interest themselves in household affairs.

An old gentleman and a young lady, travelling, unattended, in a rusty old chariot with post-horses; coming nobody knew whence, and going nobody knew whither; had turned out of the high road, and driven unexpectedly to the Blue Dragon: and here was the old gentleman, who had taken this step by reason of his sudden illness in the carriage, suffering the most horrible cramps and spasms, yet protesting and vowing in the very midst of his pain, that he wouldn't have a doctor sent for, and wouldn't take any remedies but those which the young lady administered from a small medicine-chest, and wouldn't, in a word, do anything but terrify the

landlady out of her five wits, and obstinately refuse compliance with every suggestion that was made to him.

Of all the five hundred proposals for his relief which the good woman poured out in less than half-an-hour, he would entertain but one. That was, that he should go to bed. And it was in the preparation of his bed, and the arrangement of his chamber, that all the stir was made in the room behind the Dragon.

He was, beyond all question, very ill, and suffered exceedingly: not the less, perhaps, because he was a strong and vigorous old man, with a will of iron, and a voice of brass. But neither the apprehensions which he plainly entertained, at times, for his life, nor the great pain he underwent, influenced his resolution in the least degree. He would have no person sent for. The worse he grew, the more rigid and inflexible he became in his determination. If they sent for any person to attend him, man, woman, or child, he would leave the house directly (so he told them), though he quitted it on foot, and died upon the threshold of the door.

Now, there being no medical practitioner actually resident in the village, but a poor apothecary who was also a grocer and general dealer, the landlady had, upon her own responsibility, sent for him, in the very first burst and outset of the disaster. Of course it follows, as a necessary result of his being wanted, that he was not at home. He had gone some miles away, and was not expected home until late at night; so, the landlady being by this time pretty well beside herself, despatched the same messenger in all haste for Mr. Pecksniff, as a learned man who could bear a deal of responsibility, and a moral man who could administer a world of comfort to a troubled mind. That the guest had need of some efficient service under the latter head was obvious enough from the restless expressions, importing, however, rather a worldly than a spiritual anxiety, to which he gave frequent utterance.

From this last-mentioned secret errand, the messenger returned with no better news than from the first; Mr. Pecksniff was not at home. However, they got the patient into bed, without him; and, in the course of two hours, he gradually became so far better that there were much longer intervals than at first between his terms of suffering. By degrees, he ceased to suffer at all: though his exhaustion was occasionally so great, that it suggested hardly less alarm than his actual endurance had done.

It was in one of his intervals of repose, when,

looking round with great caution, and reaching uneasily out of his nest of pillows, he endeavoured, with a strange air of secrecy and distrust, to make use of the writing materials which he had ordered to be placed on a table beside him, that the young lady and the mistress of the Blue Dragon, found themselves sitting side by side before the fire in the sick chamber.

The mistress of the Blue Dragon was in outward appearance just what a landlady should be: broad, buxom, comfortable, and good-looking, with a face of clear red and white, which by its jovial aspect, at once bore testimony to her hearty participation of the good things in the larder and cellar, and to their thriving and healthful influences. She was a widow, but years ago had passed through her state of weeds, and burst into flower again; and in full bloom she had continued ever since; and in full bloom she was now; with roses on her ample skirts, and roses on her bodice, roses in her cap, roses in her cheeks,—ay, and roses, worth the gathering too, on her lips, for that matter. She had still a bright black eye, and jet black hair; she was comely, dimpled, plump, and tight as a gooseberry; and though she was not exactly what the world calls young, you may make an affidavit, on trust, before any mayor or magistrate in Christendom, that there are a great many young ladies in the world (blessings on them, one and all!) whom you wouldn't like half as well, or admire half as much, as the beaming hostess of the Blue Dragon.

As this fair matron sat beside the fire, she glanced occasionally, with all the pride of ownership, about the room; which was a large apartment, such as one may see in country places, with a low roof and a sunken flooring, all downhill from the door, and a descent of two steps on the inside, so exquisitely unexpected, that strangers, despite the most elaborate cautioning, usually dived in head-first, as into a plunging-bath. It was none of your frivolous and preposterously bright bedrooms, where nobody can close an eye with any kind of propriety or decent regard to the association of ideas; but it was a good, dull, leaden, drowsy place, where every article of furniture reminded you that you came there to sleep, and that you were expected to go to sleep. There was no wakeful reflection of the fire there, as in your modern chambers, which upon the darkest nights have a watchful consciousness of French polish; the old Spanish mahogany winked at it now and then, as a dozing cat or dog might, nothing more. The very size and shape, and hopeless immovability,

of the bedstead, and wardrobe, and in a minor degree of even the chairs and tables, provoked sleep; they were plainly apoplectic and disposed to snore. There were no staring portraits to remonstrate with you for being lazy; no round-eyed birds upon the curtains, disgustingly wide awake, and insufferably prying. The thick neutral hangings, and the dark blinds, and the heavy heap of bed-clothes, were all designed to hold in sleep, and act as non-conductors to the day and getting up. Even the old stuffed fox upon the top of the wardrobe was devoid of any spark of vigilance, for his glass eye had fallen out, and he slumbered as he stood.

The wandering attention of the mistress of the Blue Dragon roved to these things but twice or thrice, and then for but an instant at a time. It soon deserted them, and even the distant bed with its strange burden, for the young creature immediately before her, who, with her downcast eyes intently fixed upon the fire, sat wrapped in silent meditation.

She was very young; apparently not more than seventeen; timid and shrinking in her manner, and yet with a greater share of self-possession and control over her emotions than usually belongs to a far more advanced period of female life. This she had abundantly shown, but now, in her tending of the sick gentleman. She was short in stature; and her figure was slight, as became her years; but all the charms of youth and maidenhood set it off, and clustered on her gentle brow. Her face was very pale, in part no doubt from recent agitation. Her dark brown hair, disordered from the same cause, had fallen negligently from its bonds, and hung upon her neck: for which instance of its waywardness, no male observer would have had the heart to blame it.

Her attire was that of a lady, but extremely plain; and in her manner, even when she sat as still as she did then, there was an indefinable something which appeared to be in kindred with her scrupulously unpretending dress. She had sat at first looking anxiously towards the bed; but seeing that the patient remained quiet, and was busy with his writing, she had softly moved her chair into its present place: partly, as it seemed, from an instinctive consciousness that he desired to avoid observation; and partly that she might, unseen by him, give some vent to the natural feelings she had hitherto suppressed.

Of all this, and much more, the rosy landlady of the Blue Dragon took an accurate note and observation as only woman can take of woman. And at length she said, in a voice too low, she knew, to reach the bed:

"You have seen the gentleman in this way before, miss? Is he used to these attacks?"

"I have seen him very ill before, but not so ill as he has been to-night."

"What a Providence!" said the landlady of the Dragon, "that you had the prescriptions and the medicines with you, miss!"

"They are intended for such an emergency. We never travel without them."

"Oh!" thought the hostess, "then we are in the habit of travelling, and of travelling together."

She was so conscious of expressing this in her face, that meeting the young lady's eyes immediately afterwards, and being a very honest hostess, she was rather confused.

"The gentleman—your grandpapa"—she resumed, after a short pause, "being so bent on having no assistance, must terrify you very much, miss?"

"I have been very much alarmed to-night. He—he is not my grandfather."

"Father, I should have said," returned the hostess, sensible of having made an awkward mistake.

"Nor my father," said the young lady. "Nor," she added, slightly smiling with a quick perception of what the landlady was going to add, "Nor my uncle. We are not related."

"Oh dear me!" returned the landlady, still more embarrassed than before: "how could I be so very much mistaken: knowing, as anybody in their proper senses might, that when a gentleman is ill, he looks so much older than he really is! That I should have called you, 'Miss,' too, Ma'am!" But when she had proceeded thus far, she glanced involuntarily at the third finger of the young lady's left hand, and faltered again: for there was no ring upon it.

"When I told you we were not related," said the other mildly, but not without confusion on her own part, "I meant not in any way. Not even by marriage. Did you call me, Martin?"

"Call you?" cried the old man, looking quickly up, and hurriedly drawing beneath the coverlet, the paper on which he had been writing. "No."

She had moved a pace or two towards the bed, but stopped immediately, and went no farther.

"No," he repeated, with a petulant emphasis. "Why do you ask me? If I had called you, what need for such a question?"

"It was the creaking of the sign outside, sir, I dare say," observed the landlady: a suggestion by the way (as she felt a moment after she had made it), not at all complimentary to the voice of the old gentleman.

"No matter what, ma'am," he rejoined: "it wasn't I. Why how you stand there, Mary, as if I had the plague! But they're all afraid of me," he added, leaning helplessly backwards on his pillow, "even she! There is a curse upon me. What else have I to look for!"

"O dear, no. Oh no, I'm sure," said the good-tempered landlady, rising and going towards him. "Be of better cheer, sir. These are only sick fancies."

"What are only sick fancies?" He retorted. "What do you know about fancies? Who told *you* about fancies? The old story! Fancies!"

"Only see again there, how you take one up!" said the mistress of the Blue Dragon, with unimpaired good humour. "Dear heart alive, there is no harm in the word, sir, if it is an old one. Folks in good health have their fancies too, and strange ones, every day."

Harmless as this speech appeared to be, it acted on the traveller's distrust, like oil on fire. He raised his head up in the bed, and, fixing on her two dark eyes whose brightness was exaggerated by the paleness of his hollow cheeks, as they in turn, together with his straggling locks of long grey hair, were rendered whiter by the tight black velvet skull-cap which he wore, he searched her face intently.

"Ah! you begin too soon," he said, in so low a voice that he seemed to be thinking it, rather than addressing her. "But you lose no time. You do your errand, and you earn your fee. Now, who may be *your* client?"

The landlady looked in great astonishment at her whom he called Mary, and finding no rejoinder in the drooping face, looked back again at him. At first she had recoiled involuntarily, supposing him disordered in his mind; but the slow composure of his manner, and the settled purpose announced in his strong features, and gathering, most of all, about his puckered mouth, forbade the supposition.

"Come," he said, "tell me who is it? Being here, it is not very hard for me to guess, you may suppose."

"Martin," interposed the young lady, laying her hand upon his arm; "reflect how short a time we have been in this house, and that even your name is unknown here."

"Unless," he said, "you—." He was evidently tempted to express a suspicion of her having broken his confidence in favour of the landlady, but either remembering her tender nursing, or being moved in some sort, by her face, he checked himself, and changing his uneasy posture in the bed, was silent.

"There!" said Mrs. Lupin: for in that name

the Blue Dragon was licensed to furnish entertainment both to man and beast. "Now, you will be well again, sir. You forgot, for the moment, that there were none but friends here."

"Oh!" cried the old man moaning impatiently, as he tossed one restless arm upon the coverlet, "why do you talk to me of friends! Can you or anybody teach me to know who are my friends, and who my enemies?"

"At least," urged Mrs. Lupin gently, "this young lady is your friend, I'm sure."

"She has no temptation to be otherwise," cried the old man, like one whose hope and confidence were utterly exhausted. "I suppose she is. Heaven knows. There: let me try to sleep. Leave the candle where it is."

As they retired from the bed, he drew forth the writing which had occupied him so long, and holding it in the flame of the taper burnt it to ashes. That done, he extinguished the light, and turning his face away with a heavy sigh, drew the coverlet about his head, and lay quite still.



"WE WILL SAY, IF YOU PLEASE," ADDED MR. PECKSNIFF, WITH GREAT TENDERNESS OF MANNER, "THAT IT ARISES FROM A COLD IN THE HEAD, OR IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO SNUFF, OR SMELLING-SALTS, OR ONIONS, OR ANYTHING BUT THE REAL CAUSE."

This destruction of the paper, both as being strangely inconsistent with the labour he had devoted to it and as involving considerable danger of fire to the Dragon, occasioned Mrs. Lupin not a little consternation. But the young lady evincing no surprise, curiosity, or alarm, whispered her, with many thanks for her solicitude and company, that she would remain there some time longer; and that she begged her not

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 2.

to share her watch, as she was well used to being alone, and would pass the time in reading.

Mrs. Lupin had her full share and dividend of that large capital of curiosity which is inherited by her sex, and at another time it might have been difficult so to impress this hint upon her as to induce her to take it. But now, in sheer wonder and amazement at these mysteries, she withdrew at once, and repairing straight-

way to her own little parlour below-stairs, sat down in her easy-chair with unnatural composure. At this very crisis, a step was heard in the entry, and Mr. Pecksniff, looking sweetly over the half-door of the bar, and into the vista of snug privacy beyond, murmured :

"Good evening, Mrs. Lupin!"

"Oh dear me, sir!" she cried, advancing to receive him, "I am so very glad you have come."

"And I am very glad I have come," said Mr. Pecksniff, "if I can be of service. I am very glad I have come. What is the matter, Mrs. Lupin?"

"A gentleman taken ill upon the road, has been so very bad up-stairs, sir," said the tearful hostess.

"A gentleman taken ill upon the road, has been so very bad up-stairs, has he?" repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "Well, well!"

Now there was nothing that one may call decidedly original in this remark, nor can it be exactly said to have contained any wise precept theretofore unknown to mankind, or to have opened any hidden source of consolation: but Mr. Pecksniff's manner was so bland, and he nodded his head so soothingly, and showed in everything such an affable sense of his own excellence, that anybody would have been, as Mrs. Lupin was, comforted by the mere voice and presence of such a man; and, though he had merely said "a verb must agree with its nominative case in number and person, my good friend," or "eight times eight are sixty-four, my worthy soul," must have felt deeply grateful to him for his humanity and wisdom.

"And how," asked Mr. Pecksniff, drawing off his gloves and warming his hands before the fire, as benevolently as if they were somebody else's, not his: "and how is he now?"

"He is better, and quite tranquil," answered Mrs. Lupin.

"He is better, and quite tranquil," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Very well! ve-ry well!"

Here again, though the statement was Mrs. Lupin's and not Mr. Pecksniff's, Mr. Pecksniff made it his own and consoled her with it. It was not much when Mrs. Lupin said it, but it was a whole book when Mr. Pecksniff said it. "I observe," he seemed to say, "and, through me, morality in general remarks, that he is better and quite tranquil."

"There must be weighty matters on his mind though," said the hostess, shaking her head, "for he talks, sir, in the strangest way you ever heard. He is far from easy in his thoughts, and wants some proper advice from those whose goodness makes it worth his having."

"Then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "he is the sort

of customer for me." But though he said this in the plainest language, he didn't speak a word. He only shook his head: disparagingly of himself too.

"I am afraid, sir," continued the landlady, first looking round to assure herself that there was nobody within hearing, and then looking down upon the floor. "I am very much afraid, sir, that his conscience is troubled by his not being related—or—or even married to—a very young lady—"

"Mrs. Lupin!" said Mr. Pecksniff, holding up his hand with something in his manner as nearly approaching to severity, as any expression of his, mild being that he was, could ever do. "Person! young person?"

"A very young person," said Mrs. Lupin, courtesying and blushing: "I beg your pardon, sir, but I have been so hurried to-night, that I don't know what I say—who is with him now?"

"Who is with him now," ruminated Mr. Pecksniff, warming his back (as he had warmed his hands) as if it were a widow's back, or an orphan's back, or an enemy's back, or a back that any less excellent man would have suffered to be cold: "Oh dear me, dear me!"

"At the same time I am bound to say, and I do say with all my heart," observed the hostess, earnestly, "that her looks and manner almost disarm suspicion."

"Your suspicion, Mrs. Lupin," said Mr. Pecksniff gravely, "is very natural."

Touching which remark, let it be written down to their confusion, that the enemies of this worthy man unblushingly maintained that he always said of what was very bad, that it was very natural; and that he unconsciously betrayed his own nature in doing so.

"Your suspicion, Mrs. Lupin," he repeated, "is very natural, and I have no doubt correct. I will wait upon these travellers."

With that he took off his great-coat, and having run his fingers through his hair, thrust one hand gently in the bosom of his waistcoat, and meekly signed to her to lead the way.

"Shall I knock?" asked Mrs. Lupin, when they reached the chamber door.

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "enter if you please."

They went in on tiptoe: or rather the hostess took that precaution, for Mr. Pecksniff always walked softly. The old gentleman was still asleep, and his young companion still sat reading by the fire.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Pecksniff, pausing at the door, and giving his head a melancholy roll, "I am afraid that this looks artful. I am

afraid, Mrs. Lupin, do you know, that this looks very artful!"

As he finished this whisper, he advanced, before the hostess; and at the same time the young lady, hearing footsteps, rose. Mr. Pecksniff glanced at the volume she held, and whispered Mrs. Lupin again: if possible, with increased despondency.

"Yes, ma'am," he said, "it is a good book. I was fearful of that beforehand. I am apprehensive that this is a very deep thing indeed!"

"What gentleman is this?" inquired the object of his virtuous doubts.

"Hush! don't trouble yourself, ma'am," said Mr. Pecksniff, as the landlady was about to answer. "This young"—in spite of himself he hesitated when 'person' rose to his lips, and substituted another word: "this young stranger, Mrs. Lupin, will excuse me for replying briefly, that I reside in this village; it may be in an influential manner, however undeserved; and that I have been summoned here, by you. I am here, as I am everywhere, I hope, in sympathy for the sick and sorry."

With these impressive words, Mr. Pecksniff passed over to the bedside, where, after patting the counterpane once or twice in a very solemn manner, as if by that means he gained a clear insight into the patient's disorder, he took his seat in a large arm-chair, and in an attitude of some thoughtfulness and much comfort, waited for his waking. Whatever objection the young lady urged to Mrs. Lupin went no further, for nothing more was said to Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Pecksniff said nothing more to anybody else.

Full half-an-hour elapsed before the old man stirred, but at length he turned himself in bed, and, though not yet awake, gave tokens that his sleep was drawing to an end. By little and little he removed the bed-clothes from about his head, and turned still more towards the side where Mr. Pecksniff sat. In course of time his eyes opened; and he lay for a few moments as people newly roused sometimes will, gazing indolently at his visitor, without any distinct consciousness of his presence.

There was nothing remarkable in these proceedings, except the influence they worked on Mr. Pecksniff, which could hardly have been surpassed by the most marvellous of natural phenomena. Gradually his hands became tightly clasped upon the elbows of the chair, his eyes dilated with surprise, his mouth opened, his hair stood more erect upon his forehead than its custom was, until, at length, when the old man rose in bed, and stared at him with scarcely less emotion than he showed himself,

the Pecksniff doubts were all resolved, and he exclaimed aloud:

"You *are* Martin Chuzzlewit!"

His consternation of surprise was so genuine, that the old man, with all the disposition that he clearly entertained to believe it assumed, was convinced of its reality.

"I *am* Martin Chuzzlewit," he said, bitterly: "and Martin Chuzzlewit wishes you had been hanged, before you had come here to disturb him in his sleep. Why, I dreamed of this fellow!" he said, lying down again, and turning away his face, "before I knew that he was near me!"

"My good cousin—" said Mr. Pecksniff.

"There! His very first words!" cried the old man, shaking his grey head to and fro upon the pillow, and throwing up his hands. "In his very first words he asserts his relationship! I knew he would: they all do it! Near or distant, blood or water, it's all one. Ugh! What a calendar of deceit, and lying, and false-witnessing, the sound of any word of kindred opens before me!"

"Pray do not be hasty, Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Pecksniff, in a tone that was at once in the sublimest degree compassionate and dispassionate; for he had by this time recovered from his surprise, and was in full possession of his virtuous self. "You will regret being hasty, I know you will."

"You know!" said Martin, contemptuously.

"Yes," retorted Mr. Pecksniff. "Ay, ay, Mr. Chuzzlewit: and don't imagine that I mean to court or flatter you: for nothing is further from my intention. Neither, sir, need you entertain the least misgiving that I shall repeat that obnoxious word which has given you so much offence already. Why should I? What do I expect or want from you? There is nothing in your possession that I know of, Mr. Chuzzlewit, which is much to be coveted for the happiness it brings you."

"That's true enough," muttered the old man.

"Apart from that consideration," said Mr. Pecksniff, watchful of the effect he made, "it must be plain to you (I am sure) by this time, that if I had wished to insinuate myself into your good opinion, I should have been, of all things, careful not to address you as a relative: knowing your humour, and being quite certain beforehand that I could not have had a worse letter of recommendation."

Martin made not any verbal answer; but he as clearly implied, though only by a motion of his legs beneath the bed-clothes, that there was reason in this, and that he could not dispute it, as if he had said as much in good set terms.

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, keeping his hand in his waistcoat as though he were ready, on the shortest notice, to produce his heart for Martin Chuzzlewit's inspection, "I came here to offer my services to a stranger. I make no offer of them to you, because I know you would distrust me if I did. But lying on that bed, sir, I regard you as a stranger, and I have just that amount of interest in you, which I hope I should feel in any stranger, circumstanced as you are. Beyond that, I am quite as indifferent to you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as you are to me."

Having said which, Mr. Pecksniff threw himself back in the easy-chair: so radiant with ingenuous honesty, that Mrs. Lupin almost wondered not to see a stained-glass Glory, such as the Saint wore in the church, shining about his head.

A long pause succeeded. The old man, with increased restlessness, changed his posture several times. Mrs. Lupin and the young lady gazed in silence at the counterpane. Mr. Pecksniff toyed abstractedly with his eye-glass, and kept his eyes shut, that he might ruminate the better.

"Eh?" he said at last: opening them suddenly, and looking towards the bed. "I beg your pardon. I thought you spoke. Mrs. Lupin," he continued, slowly rising, "I am not aware that I can be of any service to you here. The gentleman is better, and you are as good a nurse as he can have. Eh?"

This last note of interrogation bore reference to another change of posture on the old man's part, which brought his face towards Mr. Pecksniff for the first time since he had turned away from him.

"If you desire to speak to me before I go, sir," continued that gentleman, after another pause, "you may command my leisure; but I must stipulate, in justice to myself, that you do so as to a stranger: strictly as to a stranger."

Now if Mr. Pecksniff knew, from anything Martin Chuzzlewit had expressed in gestures, that he wanted to speak to him, he could only have found it out on some such principle as prevails in melodramas, and in virtue of which the elderly farmer with the comic son always knows what the dumb-girl means when she takes refuge in his garden, and relates her personal memoirs in incomprehensible pantomime. But without stopping to make any inquiry on this point, Martin Chuzzlewit signed to his young companion to withdraw, which she immediately did, along with the landlady: leaving him and Mr. Pecksniff alone together. For some time they looked at each other in

silence; or rather the old man looked at Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Pecksniff, again closing his eyes on all outward objects, took an inward survey of his own breast. That it amply repaid him for his trouble, and afforded a delicious and enchanting prospect, was clear from the expression of his face.

"You wish me to speak to you as to a total stranger," said the old man, "do you?"

Mr. Pecksniff replied, by a shrug of his shoulders and an apparent turning round of his eyes in their sockets before he opened them, that he was still reduced to the necessity of entertaining that desire.

"You shall be gratified," said Martin. "Sir, I am a rich man. Not so rich as some suppose, perhaps, but yet wealthy. I am not a miser, sir, though even that charge is made against me, as I hear, and currently believed. I have no pleasure in hoarding. I have no pleasure in the possession of money. The devil that we call by that name can give me nothing but unhappiness."

It would be no description of Mr. Pecksniff's gentleness of manner, to adopt the common parlance, and say, that he looked at this moment as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. He rather looked as if any quantity of butter might have been made out of him, by churning the milk of human kindness, as it spouted upwards from his heart.

"For the same reason that I am not a hoarder of money," said the old man, "I am not lavish of it. Some people find their gratification in storing it up; and others theirs in parting with it; but I have no gratification connected with the thing. Pain and bitterness are the only goods it ever could procure for me. I hate it. It is a spectre walking before me through the world, and making every social pleasure hideous."

A thought arose in Mr. Pecksniff's mind, which must have instantly mounted to his face, or Martin Chuzzlewit would not have resumed as quickly and as sternly as he did:

"You would advise me, for my peace of mind, to get rid of this source of misery, and transfer it to some one who could bear it better. Even you, perhaps, would rid me of a burden under which I suffer so grievously. But, kind stranger," said the old man, whose every feature darkened as he spoke, "good Christian stranger, that is a main part of my trouble. In other hands, I have known money to do good; in other hands I have known it triumphed in, and boasted of with reason, as the master-key to all the brazen gates that close upon the paths to worldly hon-

our, fortune, and enjoyment. To what man or woman; to what worthy, honest, incorruptible creature; shall I confide such a talisman, either now or when I die? Do you know any such person? *Your* virtues are of course inestimable, but can you tell me of any other living creature who will bear the test of contact with myself?"

"Of contact with yourself, sir?" echoed Mr. Pecksniff.

"Ay," returned the old man, "the test of contact with me—with me. You have heard of him whose misery (the gratification of his own foolish wish) was, that he turned everything he touched, to gold. The curse of my existence, and the realisation of my own mad desire, is that by the golden standard which I bear about me, I am doomed to try the metal of all other men, and find it false and hollow."

Mr. Pecksniff shook his head, and said, "You think so."

"Oh yes," cried the old man, "I think so! and in your telling me 'I think so,' I recognise the true unworldly ring of *your* metal. I tell you, man," he added, with increasing bitterness, "that I have gone, a rich man, among people of all grades and kinds; relatives, friends, and strangers; among people in whom, when I was poor, I had confidence, and justly, for they never once deceived me then, or, to me, wronged each other. But I have never found one nature, no, not one, in which, being wealthy and alone, I was not forced to detect the latent corruption that lay hid within it, waiting for such as I to bring it forth. Treachery, deceit, and low design; hatred of competitors real or fancied, for my favour; meanness, falsehood, baseness, and servility; or," and here he looked closely in his cousin's eyes, "or an assumption of honest independence, almost worse than all; these are the beauties which my wealth has brought to light. Brother against brother, child against parent, friends treading on the faces of friends, this is the social company by whom my way has been attended. There are stories told—they may be true or false—of rich men, who, in the garb of poverty, have found out virtue and rewarded it. They were dolts and idiots for their pains. They should have made the search in their own characters. They should have shown themselves fit objects to be robbed and preyed upon and plotted against, and adulated by any knaves, who, but for joy, would have spat upon their coffins when they died their dupes; and then their search would have ended as mine has done, and they would be what I am."

Mr. Pecksniff not at all knowing what it might be best to say, in the momentary pause

which ensued upon these remarks, made an elaborate demonstration of intending to deliver something very oracular indeed: trusting to the certainty of the old man interrupting him, before he should utter a word. Nor was he mistaken, for Martin Chuzzlewit having taken breath, went on to say:

"Hear me to an end; judge what profit you are like to gain from any repetition of this visit; and leave me. I have so corrupted and changed the nature of all those who have ever attended on me, by breeding avaricious plots and hopes within them; I have engendered such domestic strife and discord, by tarrying even with members of my own family; I have been such a lighted torch in peaceful homes, kindling up all the inflammable gases and vapours in their moral atmosphere, which, but for me, might have proved harmless to the end; that I have, I may say, fled from all who knew me, and taking refuge in secret places, have lived, of late, the life of one who is hunted. The young girl whom you just now saw—what! your eye lightens when I talk of her! You hate her already, do you!"

"Upon my word, sir!" said Mr. Pecksniff, laying his hand upon his breast, and dropping his eyelids.

"I forgot," cried the old man, looking at him with a keenness which the other seemed to feel, although he did not raise his eyes so as to see it: "I ask your pardon. I forgot you were a stranger. For the moment you reminded me of one Pecksniff, a cousin of mine. As I was saying—the young girl whom you just now saw, is an orphan child, whom, with one steady purpose, I have bred and educated, or, if you prefer the word, adopted. For a year or more she has been my constant companion, and she is my only one. I have taken, as she knows, a solemn oath never to leave her sixpence when I die, but while I live I make her an annual allowance: not extravagant in its amount and yet not stinted. There is a compact between us that no term of affectionate cajolery shall ever be addressed by either to the other, but that she shall call me always by my Christian name: I her, by hers. She is bound to me in life by ties of interest, and losing by my death, and having no expectation disappointed, will mourn it, perhaps: though for that I care little. This is the only kind of friend I have or will have. Judge from such premises what a profitable hour you have spent in coming here, and leave me: to return no more."

With these words, the old man fell slowly back upon his pillow. Mr. Pecksniff as slowly rose, and, with a prefatory hem, began as follows:

"Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"There. Go!" interposed the other. "Enough of this. I am weary of you."

"I am sorry for that, sir," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff, "because I have a duty to discharge, from which, depend upon it, I shall not shrink. No, sir, I shall not shrink."

It is a lamentable fact, that as Mr. Pecksniff stood erect beside the bed, in all the dignity of Goodness, and addressed him thus, the old man cast an angry glance towards the candlestick, as if he were possessed by a strong inclination to launch it at his cousin's head. But he constrained himself, and pointing with his finger to the door, informed him that his road lay there.

"Thank you," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I am aware of that; I am going. But before I go, I crave your leave to speak, and more than that, Mr. Chuzzlewit, I must and will—yes, indeed, I repeat it, must and will—be heard. I am not surprised, sir, at anything you have told me to-night. It is natural, very natural, and the greater part of it was known to me before. I will not say," continued Mr. Pecksniff, drawing out his pocket-handkerchief, and winking with both eyes at once, as it were, against his will, "I will not say that you are mistaken in me. While you are in your present mood I would not say so for the world. I almost wish, indeed, that I had a different nature, that I might repress even this slight confession of weakness: which I cannot disguise from you: which I feel is humiliating; but which you will have the goodness to excuse. We will say, if you please," added Mr. Pecksniff, with great tenderness of manner, "that it arises from a cold in the head, or is attributable to snuff, or smelling-salts, or onions, or anything but the real cause."

Here he paused for an instant, and concealed his face behind his pocket-handkerchief. Then, smiling faintly, and holding the bed-furniture with one hand, he resumed:

"But, Mr. Chuzzlewit, while I am forgetful of myself, I owe it to myself, and to my character—ay, sir, and I *have* a character which is very dear to me, and will be the best inheritance of my two daughters—to tell you, on behalf of another, that your conduct is wrong, unnatural, indefensible, monstrous. And I tell you, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, towering on tiptoe among the curtains, as if he were literally rising above all worldly considerations, and were fain to hold on tight, to keep himself from darting skywards like a rocket, "I tell you without fear or favour, that it will not do for you to be unmindful of your grandson, young Martin, who has the strongest natural claim upon you. It will not do, sir," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his

head. "You may think it will do, but it won't. You must provide for that young man; you shall provide for him; and you *will* provide for him. I believe," said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing at the pen-and-ink, "that in secret, you have already done so. Bless you for doing so. Bless you for doing right, sir. Bless you for hating me. And good night!"

So saying, Mr. Pecksniff waved his right hand with much solemnity; and once more inserting it in his waistcoat, departed. There was emotion in his manner, but his step was firm. Subject to human weaknesses, he was upheld by conscience.

Martin lay for some time, with an expression on his face of silent wonder, not unmixed with rage: at length he muttered in a whisper:

"What does this mean? Can the false-hearted boy have chosen such a tool as yonder fellow who has just gone out? Why not! He has conspired against me, like the rest, and they are but birds of one feather. A new plot; a new plot! Oh self, self, self! At every turn, nothing but self!"

He fell to trifling, as he ceased to speak, with the ashes of the burnt paper in the candlestick. He did so, at first, in pure abstraction, but they presently became the subject of his thoughts.

"Another will made and destroyed," he said, "nothing determined on, nothing done, and I might have died to-night! I plainly see to what foul uses all this money will be put at last," he cried, almost writhing in the bed: "after filling me with cares and miseries all my life, it will perpetuate discord and bad passions when I am dead. So it always is. What lawsuits grow out of the graves of rich men, every day: sowing perjury, hatred, and lies among near kindred, where there should be nothing but love! Heaven help us, we have much to answer for! Oh self, self, self! Every man for himself, and no creature for me!"

Universal self! Was there nothing of its shadow in these reflections, and in the history of Martin Chuzzlewit, on his own showing?

CHAPTER IV.

FROM WHICH IT WILL APPEAR THAT IF UNION BE STRENGTH, AND FAMILY AFFECTION BE PLEASANT TO CONTEMPLATE, THE CHUZZLEWITS WERE THE STRONGEST AND MOST AGREEABLE FAMILY IN THE WORLD.

THAT worthy man Mr. Pecksniff having taken leave of his cousin in the solemn terms re-

cited in the last chapter, withdrew to his own home, and remained there, three whole days : not so much as going out for a walk beyond the boundaries of his own garden, lest he should be hastily summoned to the bedside of his penitent and remorseful relative, whom, in his ample benevolence, he had made up his mind to forgive unconditionally, and to love on any terms. But, such was the obstinacy and such the bitter nature of that stern old man, that no repentant summons came ; and the fourth day found Mr. Pecksniff apparently much farther from his Christian object than the first.

During the whole of this interval, he haunted the Dragon at all times and seasons in the day and night, and, returning good for evil, evinced the deepest solicitude in the progress of the obdurate invalid ; insomuch that Mrs. Lupin was fairly melted by his disinterested anxiety (for he often particularly required her to take notice that he would do the same by any stranger or pauper in the like condition), and shed many tears of admiration and delight.

Meantime old Martin Chuzzlewit remained shut up in his own chamber, and saw no person but his young companion, saving the hostess of the Blue Dragon, who was, at certain times, admitted to his presence. So surely as she came into the room, however, Martin feigned to fall asleep. It was only when he and the young lady were alone, that he would utter a word, even in answer to the simplest inquiry ; though Mr. Pecksniff could make out, by hard listening at the door, that they two being left together, he was talkative enough.

It happened on the fourth evening, that Mr. Pecksniff walking, as usual, into the bar of the Dragon and finding no Mrs. Lupin there, went straight up-stairs : purposing, in the fervour of his affectionate zeal, to apply his ear once more to the keyhole, and quiet his mind by assuring himself that the hard-hearted patient was going on well. It happened that Mr. Pecksniff, coming softly upon the dark passage into which a spiral ray of light usually darted through the same keyhole, was astonished to find no such ray visible : and it happened that Mr. Pecksniff, when he had felt his way to the chamber-door, stooping hurriedly down to ascertain by personal inspection whether the jealousy of the old man had caused this keyhole to be stopped on the inside, brought his head into such violent contact with another head, that he could not help uttering in an audible voice the monosyllable " Oh ! " which was, as it were, sharply unscrewed and jerked out of him by very anguish. It happened then, and lastly, that Mr. Pecksniff found

himself immediately collared by something which smelt like several damp umbrellas, a barrel of beer, a cask of warm brandy-and-water, and a small parlour-full of stale tobacco-smoke, mixed ; and was straightway led down-stairs into the bar from which he had lately come, where he found himself standing opposite to, and in the grasp of, a perfectly strange gentleman of still stranger appearance, who, with his disengaged hand, rubbed his own head very hard, and looked at him, Pecksniff, with an evil countenance.

The gentleman was of that order of appearance, which is currently termed shabby-genteel, though in respect of his dress he can hardly be said to have been in any extremities, as his fingers were a long way out of his gloves, and the soles of his feet were at an inconvenient distance from the upper leather of his boots. His nether garments were of a bluish grey—violent in its colours once, but sobered now by age and dinginess—and were so stretched and strained in a tough conflict between his braces and his straps, that they appeared every moment in danger of flying asunder at the knees. His coat, in colour blue and of a military cut, was buttoned and frogged, up to his chin. His cravat was, in hue and pattern, like one of those mantles which hair-dressers are accustomed to wrap about their clients, during the progress of the professional mysteries. His hat had arrived at such a pass that it would have been hard to determine whether it was originally white or black. But he wore a moustache—a shaggy moustache too : nothing in the meek and merciful way, but quite in the fierce and scornful style : the regular Satanic sort of thing—and he wore, besides, a vast quantity of unbrushed hair. He was very dirty and very jaunty ; very bold and very mean ; very swaggering and very slinking ; very much like a man who might have been something better, and unspeakably like a man who deserved to be something worse.

" You were eaves-dropping at that door, you vagabond ! " said this gentleman.

Mr. Pecksniff cast him off, as Saint George might have repudiated the Dragon in that animal's last moments, and said :

" Where is Mrs. Lupin, I wonder ! can the good woman possibly be aware that there is a person here who—"

" Stay ! " said the gentleman. " Wait a bit. She *does* know. What then ? "

" What then, sir ? " cried Mr. Pecksniff. " What then ? Do you know, sir, that I am the friend and relative of that sick gentleman ? That I am his protector, his guardian, his—"

"Not his niece's husband," interposed the stranger, "I'll be sworn; for he was there before you."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with indignant surprise. "What do you tell me, sir?"

"Wait a bit!" cried the other. "Perhaps you are a cousin—the cousin who lives in this place?"

"I *am* the cousin who lives in this place," replied the man of worth.

"Your name is Pecksniff?" said the gentleman.

"It is."

"I am proud to know you, and I ask your pardon," said the gentleman touching his hat, and subsequently diving behind his cravat for a shirt collar, which however he did not succeed in bringing to the surface. "You behold in me, sir, one who has also an interest in that gentleman up-stairs. Wait a bit."

As he said this, he touched the tip of his high nose, by way of intimation that he would let Mr. Pecksniff into a secret presently; and pulling off his hat, began to search inside the crown among a mass of crumpled documents and small pieces of what may be called the bark of broken cigars: whence he presently selected the cover of an old letter, begrimed with dirt and redolent of tobacco.

"Read that," he cried, giving it to Mr. Pecksniff.

"This is addressed to Chevy Slyme, Esquire," said that gentleman.

"You know Chevy Slyme, Esquire, I believe?" returned the stranger.

Mr. Pecksniff shrugged his shoulders as though he would say "I know there is such a person, and I am sorry for it."

"Very good," remarked the gentleman. "That is my interest and business here." With that he made another dive for his shirt collar, and brought up a string.

"Now this is very distressing, my friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head and smiling composedly. "It is very distressing to me, to be compelled to say that you are not the person you claim to be. I know Mr. Slyme, my friend: this will not do: honesty is the best policy: you had better not: you had indeed."

"Stop!" cried the gentleman, stretching forth his right arm, which was so tightly wedged into his threadbare sleeve that it looked like a cloth sausage. "Wait a bit!"

He paused to establish himself immediately in front of the fire, with his back towards it. Then gathering the skirts of his coat under his

left arm, and smoothing his moustache with his right thumb and forefinger, he resumed:

"I understand your mistake, and I am not offended. Why? Because it's complimentary. You suppose I would set myself up for Chevy Slyme. Sir, if there is a man on earth whom a gentleman would feel proud and honoured to be mistaken for, that man is my friend Slyme. For he is, without an exception, the highest-minded, the most independent-spirited, most original, spiritual, classical, talented, the most thoroughly Shaksperian, if not Miltonic, and at the same time the most disgustingly-unappreciated dog I know. But, sir, I have not the vanity to attempt to pass for Slyme. Any other man in the wide world I am equal to; but Slyme is, I frankly confess, a great many cuts above me. Therefore you are wrong."

"I judged from this," said Mr. Pecksniff, holding out the cover of the letter.

"No doubt you did," returned the gentleman. "But, Mr. Pecksniff, the whole thing resolves itself into an instance of the peculiarities of genius. Every man of true genius has his peculiarity. Sir, the peculiarity of my friend Slyme is, that he is always waiting round the corner. He is perpetually round the corner, sir. He is round the corner at this instant. Now," said the gentleman, shaking his forefinger before his nose, and planting his legs wider apart as he looked attentively in Mr. Pecksniff's face, "that is a remarkably curious and interesting trait in Mr. Slyme's character, and whenever Slyme's life comes to be written, that trait must be thoroughly worked out by his biographer, or society will not be satisfied. Observe me, society will not be satisfied!"

Mr. Pecksniff coughed.

"Slyme's biographer, sir, whoever he may be," resumed the gentleman, "must apply to me; or, if I am gone to that what's-his name from which no thingumbob comes back, he must apply to my executors for leave to search among my papers. I have taken a few notes in my poor way, of some of that man's proceedings—my adopted brother, sir,—which would amaze you. He made use of an expression, sir, only on the fifteenth of last month when he couldn't meet a little bill and the other party wouldn't renew, which would have done honour to Napoleon Bonaparte in addressing the French army."

"And pray," asked Mr. Pecksniff, obviously not quite at his ease, "what may be Mr. Slyme's business here, if I may be permitted to inquire, who am compelled by a regard for my own character to disavow all interest in his proceedings?"

"In the first place," returned the gentleman, "you will permit me to say, that I object to that remark, and that I strongly and indignantly protest against it on behalf of my friend Slyme. In the next place, you will give me leave to introduce myself. My name, sir, is Tigg. The name of Montague Tigg will perhaps be familiar to you, in connection with the most remarkable events of the Peninsular War?"

Mr. Pecksniff gently shook his head.

"No matter," said the gentleman. "That man was my father, and I bear his name. I

am consequently proud—proud as Lucifer. Excuse me one moment. I desire my friend Slyme to be present at the remainder of this conference."

With this announcement he hurried away to the outer door of the Blue Dragon, and almost immediately returned with a companion shorter than himself, who was wrapped in an old blue camlet cloak with a lining of faded scarlet. His sharp features being much pinched and nipped by long waiting in the cold, and his straggling red whiskers and frowzy hair being more than



MR. PECKSNIFF IS INTRODUCED TO A RELATIVE BY MR. TIGG.

usually dishevelled from the same cause, he certainly looked rather unwholesome and uncomfortable than Shaksperian or Miltonic.

"Now," said Mr. Tigg, clapping one hand on the shoulder of his prepossessing friend, and calling Mr. Pecksniff's attention to him with the other, "you two are related; and relations never did agree, and never will: which is a wise dispensation and an inevitable thing, or there would be none but family parties, and everybody in the world would bore everybody else to death. If you were on good terms, I should consider you a most confoundedly unnatural

pair; but standing towards each other as you do, I look upon you as a couple of devilish deep-thoughted fellows, who may be reasoned with to any extent."

Here Mr. Chevy Slyme, whose great abilities seemed one and all to point towards the sneaking quarter of the moral compass, nudged his friend stealthily with his elbow, and whispered in his ear.

"Chiv," said Mr. Tigg aloud, in the high tone of one who was not to be tampered with. "I shall come to that, presently. I act upon my own responsibility, or not at all. To the extent

of such a trifling loan as a crownpiece to a man of your talents, I look upon Mr. Pecksniff as certain:" and seeing at this juncture that the expression of Mr. Pecksniff's face by no means betokened that he shared this certainty, Mr. Tigg laid his finger on his nose again for that gentleman's private and especial behoof: calling upon him thereby to take notice, that the requisition of small loans was another instance of the peculiarities of genius as developed in his friend Slyme; that he, Tigg, winked at the same, because of the strong metaphysical interest which these weaknesses possessed; and that in reference to his own personal advocacy of such small advances, he merely consulted the humour of his friend, without the least regard to his own advantage or necessities.

"Oh, Chiv, Chiv!" added Mr. Tigg, surveying his adopted brother with an air of profound contemplation after dismissing this piece of pantomime. "You are, upon my life, a strange instance of the little frailties that beset a mighty mind. If there had never been a telescope in the world, I should have been quite certain from my observation of you, Chiv, that there were spots on the sun! I wish I may die, if this isn't the queerest state of existence that we find ourselves forced into, without knowing why or wherefore, Mr. Pecksniff! Well, never mind! Moralise as we will, the world goes on. As Hamlet says, Hercules may lay about him with his club in every possible direction, but he can't prevent the cats from making a most intolerable row on the roofs of the houses, or the dogs from being shot in the hot weather if they run about the streets unmuzzled. Life's a riddle: a most infernally hard riddle to guess, Mr. Pecksniff. My own opinion is, that like that celebrated conundrum, 'Why's a man in jail like a man out of jail?' there's no answer to it. Upon my soul and body, it's the queerest sort of thing altogether—but there's no use in talking about it. Ha! ha!"

With which consolatory deduction from the gloomy premises recited, Mr. Tigg roused himself by a great effort, and proceeded in his former strain.

"Now I'll tell you what it is. I'm a most confoundedly soft-hearted kind of fellow in my way, and I cannot stand by, and see you two blades cutting each other's throats when there's nothing to be got by it. Mr. Pecksniff, you're the cousin of the testator up-stairs and we're the nephew—I say we, meaning Chiv. Perhaps in all essential points, you are more nearly related to him than we are. Very good. If so, so be it. But you can't get at him, neither can we.

I give you my brightest word of honour, sir, that I've been looking through that keyhole, with short intervals of rest, ever since nine o'clock this morning, in expectation of receiving an answer to one of the most moderate and gentlemanly applications for a little temporary assistance—only fifteen pound, and *my* security—that the mind of man can conceive. In the mean time, sir, he is perpetually closeted with, and pouring his whole confidence into the bosom of, a stranger. Now I say decisively, with regard to this state of circumstances, that it won't do; that it won't act; that it can't be; and that it must not be suffered to continue."

"Every man," said Mr. Pecksniff, "has a right, an undoubted right, (which I, for one, would not call in question for any earthly consideration: oh no!) to regulate his own proceedings by his own likings and dislikings, supposing they are not immoral and not irreligious. I may feel in my own breast, that Mr. Chuzzlewit does not regard—me, for instance: say me—with exactly that amount of Christian love which should subsist between us; I may feel grieved and hurt at the circumstance; still I may not rush to the conclusion that Mr. Chuzzlewit is wholly without a justification in all his coldnesses: Heaven forbid! Besides; how, Mr. Tigg," continued Pecksniff even more gravely and impressively than he had spoken yet, "how could Mr. Chuzzlewit be prevented from having these peculiar and most extraordinary confidences of which you speak; the existence of which I must admit; and which I cannot but deplore—for his sake? Consider, my good sir—" and here Mr. Pecksniff eyed him wistfully—"how very much at random you are talking."

"Why as to that," rejoined Tigg, "it certainly is a difficult question."

"Undoubtedly it is a difficult question," Mr. Pecksniff answered. As he spoke he drew himself aloof, and seemed to grow more mindful, suddenly, of the moral gulf between himself and the creature he addressed. "Undoubtedly it is a very difficult question. And I am far from feeling sure that it is a question any one is authorised to discuss. Good evening to you."

"You don't know that the Spottletoes are here. I suppose?" said Mr. Tigg.

"What do you mean, sir? what Spottletoes?" asked Pecksniff, stopping abruptly on his way to the door.

"Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe," said Chevy Slyme, Esquire, speaking aloud for the first time, and speaking very sulkily: shambling with his legs the while. "Spottletoe married

my father's brother's child, didn't he? And Mrs. Spottletoe is Chuzzlewit's own niece, isn't she? She was his favourite once. You may well ask what Spottletoes."

"Now, upon my sacred word!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking upwards. "This is dreadful. The rapacity of these people is absolutely frightful!"

"It's not only the Spottletoes either, Tigg," said Slyme, looking at that gentleman and speaking at Mr. Pecksniff. "Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son have got wind of it, and have come down this afternoon. I saw 'em not five minutes ago, when I was waiting round the corner."

"Oh, Mammon, Mammon!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, smiting his forehead.

"So there," said Slyme, regardless of the interruption, "are his brother and another nephew for you, already."

"This is the whole thing, sir," said Mr. Tigg; "this is the point and purpose at which I was gradually arriving, when my friend Slyme here, with six words, hit it full. Mr. Pecksniff, now that your cousin (and Chiv's uncle) has turned up, some steps must be taken to prevent his disappearing again; and, if possible, to counteract the influence which is exercised over him now, by this designing favourite. Everybody who is interested feels it, sir. The whole family is pouring down to this place. The time has come when individual jealousies and interests must be forgotten for a time, sir, and union must be made against the common enemy. When the common enemy is routed, you will all set up for yourselves again; every lady and gentleman who has a part in the game, will go in on their own account and bowl away, to the best of their ability, at the testator's wicket; and nobody will be in a worse position than before. Think of it. Don't commit yourself now. You'll find us at the Half Moon and Seven Stars in this village, at any time, and open to any reasonable proposition. Hem! Chiv, my dear fellow, go out and see what sort of a night it is."

Mr. Slyme lost no time in disappearing, and, it is to be presumed, in going round the corner. Mr. Tigg planting his legs as wide apart as he could be reasonably expected by the most sanguine man to keep them, shook his head at Mr. Pecksniff and smiled.

"We must not be too hard," he said, "upon the little eccentricities of our friend Slyme. You saw him whisper me?"

Mr. Pecksniff had seen him.

"You heard my answer, I think?"

Mr. Pecksniff had heard it.

"Five shillings, eh?" said Mr. Tigg, thoughtfully. "Ah! what an extraordinary fellow! Very moderate too!"

Mr. Pecksniff made no answer.

"Five shillings!" pursued Mr. Tigg, musing: "and to be punctually repaid next week; that's the best of it. You heard that?"

Mr. Pecksniff had not heard that.

"No! You surprise me!" cried Tigg. "That's the cream of the thing, sir. I never knew that man fail to redeem a promise, in my life. You're not in want of change, are you?"

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "thank you. Not at all."

"Just so," returned Mr. Tigg. "If you had been, I'd have got it for you." With that he began to whistle: but a dozen seconds had not elapsed when he stopped short, and, looking earnestly at Mr. Pecksniff, said:

"Perhaps you'd rather not lend Slyme five shillings?"

"I would much rather not," Mr. Pecksniff rejoined.

"Egad!" cried Tigg, gravely nodding his head as if some ground of objection occurred to him at that moment for the first time, "it's very possible you may be right. Would you entertain the same sort of objection to lending me five shillings, now?"

"Yes, I couldn't do it, indeed," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"Not even half-a-crown, perhaps?" urged Mr. Tigg.

"Not even half-a-crown."

"Why then we come," said Mr. Tigg, "to the ridiculously small amount of eighteen-pence. Ha! ha!"

"And that," said Mr. Pecksniff, "would be equally objectionable."

On receipt of this assurance, Mr. Tigg snook him heartily by both hands, protesting with much earnestness, that he was one of the most consistent and remarkable men he had ever met, and that he desired the honour of his better acquaintance. He moreover observed that there were many little characteristics about his friend Slyme, of which he could by no means, as a man of strict honour, approve; but that he was prepared to forgive him all these slight drawbacks, and much more, in consideration of the great pleasure he himself had that day enjoyed in his social intercourse with Mr. Pecksniff, which had given him a far higher and more enduring delight than the successful negotiation of any small loan on the part of his

friend could possibly have imparted. With which remarks he would beg leave, he said, to wish Mr. Pecksniff a very good evening. And so he took himself off: as little abashed by his recent failure as any gentleman would desire to be.

The meditations of Mr. Pecksniff that evening at the bar of the Dragon, and that night in his own house, were very serious and grave indeed; the more especially as the intelligence he had received from Messrs. Tigg and Slyme touching the arrival of other members of the family, was fully confirmed on more particular inquiry. For the Spottletoes had actually gone straight to the Dragon, where they were at that moment housed and mounting guard, and where their appearance had occasioned such a vast sensation, that Mrs. Lupin, scenting their errand before they had been under her roof half an hour, carried the news herself, with all possible secrecy, straight to Mr. Pecksniff's house; indeed it was her great caution in doing so which occasioned her to miss that gentleman, who entered at the front door of the Dragon, just as she emerged from the back one. Moreover, Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son Jonas were economically quartered at the Half Moon and Seven Stars, which was an obscure ale-house, and by the very next coach there came posting to the scene of action, so many other affectionate members of the family (who quarrelled with each other, inside and out, all the way down, to the utter distraction of the coachman) that in less than four-and-twenty hours the scanty tavern accommodation was at a premium, and all the private lodgings in the place, amounting to full four beds and a sofa, rose cent. per cent. in the market.

In a word, things came to that pass that nearly the whole family sat down before the Blue Dragon, and formally invested it; and Martin Chuzzlewit was in a state of siege. But he resisted bravely; refusing to receive all letters, messages, and parcels; obstinately declining to treat with anybody; and holding out no hope or promise of capitulation. Meantime the family forces were perpetually encountering each other in divers parts of the neighbourhood; and, as no one branch of the Chuzzlewit tree had ever been known to agree with another within the memory of man, there was such a skirmishing, and flouting, and snapping off of heads, in the metaphorical sense of that expression; such a bandying of words and calling of names; such an upturning of noses and wrinkling of brows; such a formal interment of good feelings and violent resurrection of ancient

grievances; as had never been known in those quiet parts since the earliest record of their civilised existence.

At length in utter despair and hopelessness, some few of the belligerents began to speak to each other in only moderate terms of mutual aggravation; and nearly all addressed themselves with a show of tolerable decency to Mr. Pecksniff, in recognition of his high character and influential position. Thus, by little and little they made common cause of Martin Chuzzlewit's obduracy, until it was agreed—if such a word can be used in connection with the Chuzzlewits—that there should be a general council and conference held at Mr. Pecksniff's house upon a certain day at noon: which all members of the family who had brought themselves within reach of the summons, were forthwith bidden and invited, solemnly, to attend.

If ever Mr. Pecksniff wore an apostolic look, he wore it on this memorable day. If ever his unruffled smile proclaimed the words, "I am a messenger of peace!" that was its mission now. If ever man combined within himself all the mild qualities of the lamb with a considerable touch of the dove, and not a dash of the crocodile, or the least possible suggestion of the very mildest seasoning of the serpent, that man was he. And, Oh, the two Miss Pecksniffs! Oh, the serene expression on the face of Charity, which seemed to say, "I know that all my family have injured me beyond the possibility of reparation, but I forgive them, for it is my duty so to do!" And, Oh, the gay simplicity of Mercy: so charming, innocent, and infant-like, that if she had gone out walking by herself, and it had been a little earlier in the season, the robin-redbreast might have covered her with leaves against her will, believing her to be one of the sweet children in the wood, come out of it, and issuing forth once more to look for blackberries in the young freshness of her heart! What words can paint the Pecksniffs in that trying hour? Oh, none: for words have naughty company among them, and the Pecksniffs were all goodness.

But when the company arrived! That was the time. When Mr. Pecksniff, rising from the seat at the table's head, with a daughter on either hand, received his guests in the best parlour and motioned them to chairs, with eyes so overflowing and countenance so damp with gracious perspiration, that he may be said to have been in a kind of moist meekness! And the company: the jealous, stony-hearted, distrustful company, who were all shut up in themselves, and had no faith in anybody, and

wouldn't believe anything, and would no more allow themselves to be softened or lulled asleep by the Pecksniffs than if they had been so many hedgehogs or porcupines!

First, there was Mr. Spottletoe, who was so bald and had such big whiskers, that he seemed to have stopped his hair, by the sudden application of some powerful remedy, in the very act of falling off his head, and to have fastened it irrevocably on his face. Then there was Mrs. Spottletoe, who being much too slim for her years, and of a poetical constitution, was accustomed to inform her more intimate friends that the said whiskers were "the lodestar of her existence;" and who could now, by reason of her strong affection for her uncle Chuzzlewit, and the shock it gave her to be suspected of testamentary designs upon him, do nothing but cry—except moan. Then there were Anthony Chuzzlewit, and his son Jonas: the face of the old man so sharpened by the wariness and cunning of his life, that it seemed to cut him a passage through the crowded room, as he edged away behind the remotest chairs; while the son had so well profited by the precept and example of the father that he looked a year or two the elder of the twain, as they stood winking their red eyes, side by side, and whispering to each other, softly. Then there was the widow of a deceased brother of Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit, who being almost supernaturally disagreeable, and having a dreary face and a bony figure and a masculine voice, was, in right of these qualities, what is commonly called a strong-minded woman; and who, if she could, would have established her claim to the title, and have shown herself, mentally speaking, a perfect Samson, by shutting up her brother-in-law in a private madhouse, until he proved his complete sanity by loving her very much. Beside her sat her spinster daughters, three in number, and of gentlemanly deportment, who had so mortified themselves with tight stays, that their tempers were reduced to something less than their waists, and sharp lacing was expressed in their very noses. Then there was a young gentleman, grand-nephew of Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit, very dark and very hairy, and apparently born for no particular purpose but to save looking-glasses the trouble of reflecting more than just the first idea and sketchy notion of a face, which had never been carried out. Then there was a solitary female cousin who was remarkable for nothing but being very deaf, and living by herself, and always having the tooth-ache. Then there was George Chuzzlewit, a gay bachelor cousin, who claimed to be young but

had been younger, and was inclined to corpulency, and rather over-fed himself; to that extent, indeed, that his eyes were strained in their sockets, as if with constant surprise; and he had such an obvious disposition to pimples, that the bright spots on his cravat, and the rich pattern on his waistcoat, and even his glittering trinkets, seemed to have broken out upon him, and not to have come into existence comfortably. Last of all, there were present Mr. Chevy Slyme and his friend Tigg. And it is worthy of remark, that although each person present disliked the other mainly because he or she *did* belong to the family, they one and all concurred in hating Mr. Tigg because he didn't.

Such was the pleasant little family circle now assembled in Mr. Pecksniff's best parlour, agreeably prepared to fall foul of Mr. Pecksniff or anybody else who might venture to say anything whatever upon any subject.

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff rising, and looking round upon them, with folded hands, "does me good. It does my daughters good. We thank you for assembling here. We are grateful to you with our whole hearts. It is a blessed distinction that you have conferred upon us, and believe me"—it is impossible to conceive how he smiled here—"we shall not easily forget it."

"I am sorry to interrupt you, Pecksniff," remarked Mr. Spottletoe, with his whiskers in a very portentous state; "but you are assuming too much to yourself, sir. Who do you imagine has it in contemplation to confer a distinction upon *you* sir?"

A general murmur echoed this inquiry and applauded it.

"If you are about to pursue the course with which you have begun sir," pursued Mr. Spottletoe in a great heat, and giving a violent rap on the table with his knuckles, "the sooner you desist, and this assembly separates, the better. I am no stranger, sir, to your preposterous desire to be regarded as the head of this family, but I can tell *you* sir—"

Oh yes indeed! *He* tell! *He!* What! He was the head, was he! From the strong-minded woman downwards everybody fell, that instant, upon Mr. Spottletoe, who after vainly attempting to be heard in silence was fain to sit down again, folding his arms and shaking his head, most wrathfully, and giving Mrs. Spottletoe to understand in dumb show that that scoundrel Pecksniff might go on for the present, but he would cut in presently and annihilate him.

"I am not sorry," said Mr. Pecksniff in resump-

tion of his address. "I am really not sorry that this little incident has happened. It is good to feel that we are met here without disguise. It is good to know that we have no reserve before each other, but are appearing freely in our own characters."

Here, the eldest daughter of the strong-minded woman rose a little way from her seat, and trembling violently from head to foot, more as it seemed with passion than timidity, expressed a general hope that some people *would* appear in their own characters, if it were only for such a proceeding having the attraction of novelty to recommend it; and that when they (meaning the some people before mentioned) talked about their relations, they would be careful to observe who was present in company at the time; otherwise it might come round to those relations' ears, in a way they little expected; and as to red noses (she observed) she had yet to learn that a red nose was any disgrace, inasmuch as people neither made nor coloured their own noses, but had that feature provided for them without being first consulted; though even upon that branch of the subject she had great doubts whether certain noses were redder than other noses, or indeed half as red as some. This remark being received with a shrill titter by the two sisters of the speaker, Miss Charity Pecksniff begged with much politeness to be informed whether any of those very low observations were levelled at her; and receiving no more explanatory answer than was conveyed in the adage "Those the cap fits, let them wear it," immediately commenced a somewhat acrimonious and personal retort, wherein she was much comforted and abetted by her sister Mercy, who laughed at the same with great heartiness: indeed far more naturally than life. And it being quite impossible that any difference of opinion can take place among women without every woman who is within hearing taking active part in it, the strong-minded lady and her two daughters, and Mrs. Spottletoe, and the deaf cousin (who was not at all disqualified from joining in the dispute by reason of being perfectly unacquainted with its merits), one and all plunged into the quarrel directly.

The two Miss Pecksniffs being a pretty good match for the three Miss Chuzzlewits, and all five young ladies having, in the figurative language of the day, a great amount of steam to dispose of, the altercation would no doubt have been a long one but for the high valour and prowess of the strong-minded woman, who, in right of her reputation for powers of sarcasm,

did so belabour and pummel Mrs. Spottletoe with taunting words that that poor lady, before the engagement was two minutes old, had no refuge but in tears. These she shed so plentifully, and so much to the agitation and grief of Mr. Spottletoe, that that gentleman, after holding his clenched fist close to Mr. Pecksniff's eyes, as if it were some natural curiosity from the near inspection whereof he was likely to derive high gratification and improvement, and after offering (for no particular reason that anybody could discover) to kick Mr. George Chuzzlewit for, and in consideration of, the trifling sum of sixpence, took his wife under his arm, and indignantly withdrew. This diversion, by distracting the attention of the combatants, put an end to the strife, which, after breaking out afresh some twice or thrice in certain inconsiderable spirts and dashes, died away in silence.

It was then that Mr. Pecksniff once more rose from his chair. It was then that the two Miss Pecksniffs composed themselves to look as if there were no such beings—not to say present, but in the whole compass of the world—as the three Miss Chuzzlewits: while the three Miss Chuzzlewits became equally unconscious of the existence of the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"It is to be lamented," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a forgiving recollection of Mr. Spottletoe's fist, "that our friend should have withdrawn himself so very hastily, though we have cause for mutual congratulation even in that, since we are assured that he is not distrustful of us in regard to anything we may say or do, while he is absent. Now, that is very soothing, is it not?"

"Pecksniff," said Anthony, who had been watching the whole party with peculiar keenness from the first—"don't you be a hypocrite."

"A what, my good sir?" demanded Mr. Pecksniff.

"A hypocrite."

"Charity, my dear," said Mr. Pecksniff, "when I take my chamber candlestick to-night, remind me to be more than usually particular in praying for Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit; who has done me an injustice."

This was said in a very bland voice, and aside, as being addressed to his daughter's private ear. With a cheerfulness of conscience, prompting almost a sprightly demeanour, he then resumed:

"All our thoughts centring in our very dear, but unkind relative, and he being as it were beyond our reach, we are met to-day, really as if we were a funeral party, except—a blessed exception—that there is no body in the house."

The strong-minded lady was not at all sure that this was a blessed exception. Quite the contrary.

"Well, my dear madam!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Be that as it may, here we are; and being here, we are to consider whether it is possible by any justifiable means—"

"Why, you know as well as I," said the strong-minded lady, "that any means are justifiable in such a case, don't you?"

"Very good, my dear madam, very good—whether it is possible by *any* means; we will say by *any* means; to open the eyes of our valued relative to his present infatuation. Whether it is possible to make him acquainted by any means with the real character and purpose of that young female whose strange, whose very strange position, in reference to himself"—here Mr. Pecksniff sunk his voice to an impressive whisper—"really casts a shadow of disgrace and shame upon this family; and who, we know"—here he raised his voice again—"else why is she his companion? harbours the very basest designs upon his weakness and his property."

In their strong feeling on this point, they, who agreed in nothing else, all concurred as one mind. Good Heaven, that she should harbour designs upon his property! The strong-minded lady was for poison, her three daughters were for Bridewell and bread-and-water, the cousin with the tooth-ache advocated Botany Bay, the two Miss Pecksniffs suggested flogging. Nobody but Mr. Tigg, who, notwithstanding his extreme shabbiness, was still understood to be in some sort a lady's-man, in right of his upper lip and his frogs, indicated a doubt of the justifiable nature of these measures; and he only ogled the three Miss Chuzzlewits with the least admixture of banter in his admiration, as though he would observe, "You are positively down upon her to too great an extent, my sweet creatures, upon my soul you are!"

"Now," said Mr. Pecksniff, crossing his two fore-fingers in a manner which was at once conciliatory and argumentative: "I will not, upon the one hand, go so far as to say that she deserves all the inflictions which have been so very forcibly and hilariously suggested;" one of his ornamental sentences; "nor will I, upon the other, on any account compromise my common understanding as a man by making the assertion that she does not. What I would observe is, that I think some practical means might be devised of inducing our respected—shall I say our revered—?"

"No!" interposed the strong-minded woman in a loud voice.

"Then I will not," said Mr. Pecksniff. "You are quite right, my dear madam, and I appreciate, and thank you for, your discriminating objection—our respected relative, to dispose himself to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the—"

"Go on, pa!" cried Mercy.

"Why, the truth is, my dear," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling upon his assembled kindred, "that I am at a loss for a word. The name of those fabulous animals (pagan, I regret to say) who used to sing in the water, has quite escaped me."

Mr. George Chuzzlewit suggested "Swans."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Not swans. Very like swans, too. Thank you."

The nephew with the outline of a countenance, speaking for the first and last time on that occasion, propounded "Oysters."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, with his own peculiar urbanity, "nor oysters. But by no means unlike oysters; a very excellent idea; thank you, my dear sir, very much. Wait! Sirens. Dear me! sirens, of course. I think, I say, that means might be devised of disposing our respected relative to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the siren-like delusions of art. Now we must not lose sight of the fact that our esteemed friend has a grandson, to whom he was, until lately, very much attached, and whom I could have wished to see here to-day, for I have a real and deep regard for him. A fine young man: a very fine young man! I would submit to you, whether we might not remove Mr. Chuzzlewit's distrust of us, and vindicate our own disinterestedness by—"

"If Mr. George Chuzzlewit has anything to say to *me*," interposed the strong-minded woman, sternly, "I beg him to speak out, like a man; and not to look at me and my daughters as if he could eat us."

"As to looking, I have heard it said, Mrs. Ned," returned Mr. George, angrily, "that a cat is free to contemplate a monarch; and therefore I hope I have some right, having been born a member of this family, to look at a person who only came into it by marriage. As to eating, I beg to say whatever bitterness your jealousies and disappointed expectations may suggest to you, that I am not a cannibal, ma'am."

"I don't know that!" cried the strong-minded woman.

"At all events, if I was a cannibal," said Mr. George Chuzzlewit, greatly stimulated by this retort, "I think it would occur to me that a lady who had outlived three husbands and suffered so very little from their loss, must be most uncommonly tough."

The strong-minded woman immediately rose.

"And I will further add," said Mr. George, nodding his head violently at every second syllable; "naming no names, and therefore hurting nobody but those whose consciences tell them they are alluded to, that I think it would be much more decent and becoming, if those who hooked and crooked themselves into this family by getting on the blind side of some of its members before marriage, and manslaughtering them afterwards by crowing over them to that strong pitch that they were glad to die, would refrain from acting the part of vultures in regard to other members of this family who are living. I think it would be full as well, if not better, if those individuals would keep at home, contenting themselves with what they have got (luckily for them) already; instead of hovering about, and thrusting their fingers into, a family pie, which they flavour much more than enough, I can tell them, when they are fifty miles away."

"I might have been prepared for this!" cried the strong-minded woman, looking about her with a disdainful smile as she moved towards the door, followed by her three daughters: "indeed I was fully prepared for it, from the first. What else could I expect in such an atmosphere as this!"

"Don't direct your halfpay-officer's gaze at me, ma'am, if you please," interposed Miss Charity; "for I won't bear it."

This was a smart stab at a pension enjoyed by the strong-minded woman, during her second widowhood and before her last coverture. It told immensely.

"I passed from the memory of a grateful country, you very miserable minx," said Mrs. Ned, "when I entered this family; and I feel now, though I did not feel then, that it served me right, and that I lost my claim upon the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland when I so degraded myself. Now my dears, if you're quite ready, and have sufficiently improved yourselves by taking to heart the genteel example of these two young ladies, I think we'll go. Mr. Pecksniff, we are very much obliged to you, really. We came to be entertained, and you have far surpassed our utmost expectations, in the amusement you have provided for us. Thank you. Good bye!"

With such departing words, did this strong-minded female paralyse the Pecksniffian energies; and so she swept out of the room, and out of the house, attended by her daughters, who, as with one accord, elevated their three noses in the air, and joined in a contemptuous titter. As they passed the parlour window on the out-

side, they were seen to counterfeit a perfect transport of delight among themselves; and with this final blow and great discouragement for those within, they vanished.

Before Mr. Pecksniff or any of his remaining visitors could offer a remark, another figure passed this window, coming, at a great rate, in the opposite direction: and immediately afterwards, Mr. Spottletoe burst into the chamber. Compared with his present state of heat, he had gone out a man of snow or ice. His head distilled such oil upon his whiskers, that they were rich and clogged with unctuous drops; his face was violently inflamed, his limbs trembled; and he gasped and strove for breath.

"My good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"Oh yes!" returned the other: "Oh yes, certainly! Oh to be sure! Oh of course! You hear him? You hear him? all of you?"

"What's the matter?" cried several voices.

"Oh nothing!" cried Spottletoe, still gasping. "Nothing at all! It's of no consequence! Ask him! He'll tell you!"

"I do not understand our friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking about him in utter amazement. "I assure you that he is quite unintelligible to me."

"Unintelligible, sir!" cried the other. "Unintelligible! Do you mean to say, sir, that you don't know what has happened! That you haven't decoyed us here, and laid a plot and a plan against us! Will you venture to say that you didn't know Mr. Chuzzlewit was going, sir, and that you don't know he's gone, sir?"

"Gone!" was the general cry.

"Gone," echoed Mr. Spottletoe. "Gone while we were sitting here. Gone. Nobody knows where he's gone. Oh of course not! Nobody knew he was going. Oh of course not! The landlady thought up to the very last moment that they were merely going for a ride; she had no other suspicion. Oh of course not! She's not this fellow's creature. Oh of course not!"

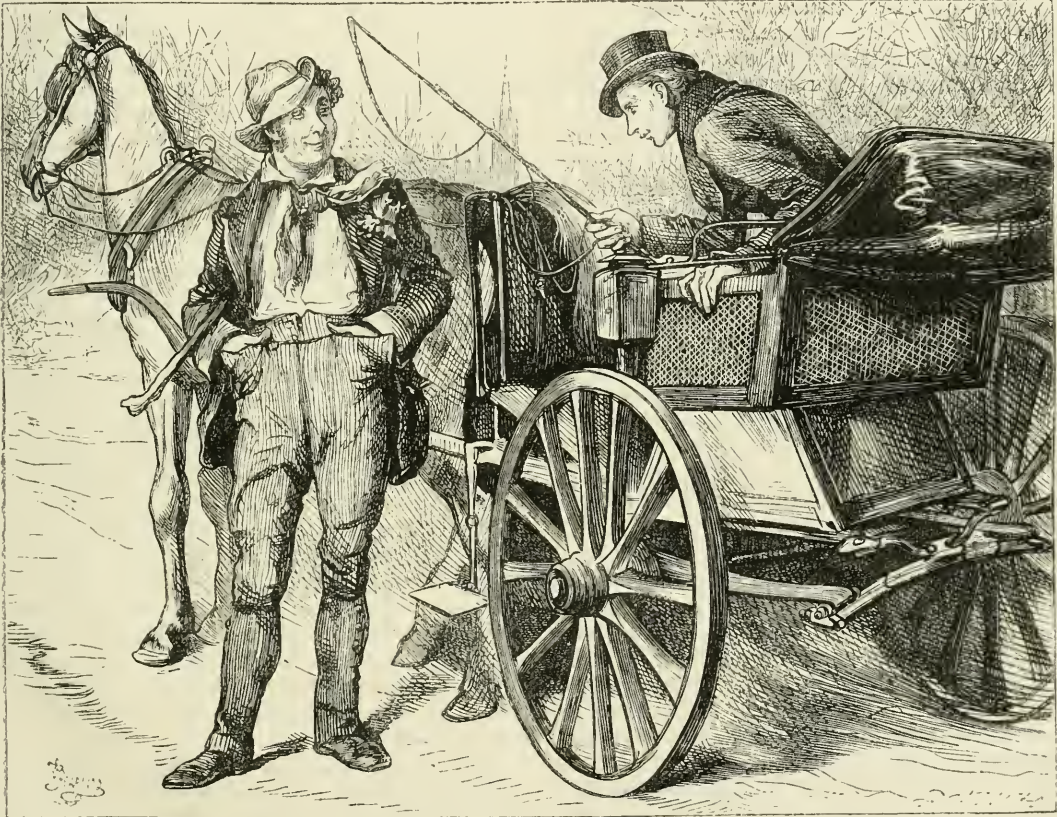
Adding to these exclamations a kind of ironical howl, and gazing upon the company for one brief instant afterwards, in a sudden silence, the irritated gentleman started off again at the same tremendous pace, and was seen no more.

It was in vain for Mr. Pecksniff to assure them that this new and opportune evasion of the family was at least as great a shock and surprise to him, as to anybody else. Of all the bullyings and denunciations that were ever heaped on one unlucky head, none can ever have exceeded in energy and heartiness those with which he was complimented by each of his

remaining relatives, singly, upon bidding him farewell.

The moral position taken by Mr. Tigg was something quite tremendous; and the deaf cousin, who had the complicated aggravation of seeing all the proceedings and hearing nothing but the catastrophe, actually scraped her shoes upon the scraper, and afterwards distributed impressions of them all over the top step, in token that she shook the dust from her feet before quitting that dissembling and perfidious mansion.

Mr. Pecksniff had, in short, but one comfort, and that was the knowledge that all these his relations and friends had hated him to the very utmost extent before; and that he, for his part, had not distributed among them any more love than, with his ample capital in that respect, he could comfortably afford to part with. This view of his affairs yielded him great consolation; and the fact deserves to be noted, as showing with what ease a good man may be consoled under circumstances of failure and disappointment.



“HE TURNED A WHIMSICAL FACE AND VERY MERRY PAIR OF BLUE EYES ON MR. PINCH.”

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINING A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE INSTALLATION OF MR. PECKSNIFF'S NEW PUPIL INTO THE BOSOM OF MR. PECKSNIFF'S FAMILY. WITH ALL THE FESTIVITIES HELD ON THAT OCCASION, AND THE GREAT ENJOYMENT OF MR. PINCH.

THE best of architects and land surveyors kept a horse, in whom the enemies already mentioned more than once in these pages, pretended to detect a fanciful resemblance to his master.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 3.

Not in his outward person, for he was a raw-boned, haggard horse, always on a much shorter allowance of corn than Mr. Pecksniff; but in his moral character, wherein, said they, he was full of promise, but of no performance. He was always, in a manner, going to go, and never going. When at his slowest rate of travelling, he would sometimes lift up his legs so high, and display such mighty action, that it was difficult to believe that he was doing less than fourteen

miles an hour; and he was for ever so perfectly satisfied with his own speed, and so little disconcerted by opportunities of comparing himself with the fastest trotters, that the illusion was the more difficult of resistance. He was a kind of animal who infused into the breasts of strangers a lively sense of hope, and possessed all those who knew him better with a grim despair. In what respect, having these points of character, he might be fairly likened to his master, that good man's slanderers only can explain. But it is a melancholy truth, and a deplorable instance of the uncharitableness of the world, that they made the comparison.

In this horse, and the hooded vehicle, whatever its proper name might be, to which he was usually harnessed—it was more like a gig with a tumour than anything else—all Mr. Pinch's thoughts and wishes centred, one bright frosty morning: for with this gallant equipage he was about to drive to Salisbury alone, there to meet with the new pupil, and thence to bring him home in triumph.

Blessings on thy simple heart, Tom Pinch, how proudly dost thou button up that scanty coat, called by a sad misnomer, for these many years, a "great" one; and how thoroughly as with thy cheerful voice thou pleasantly adjurest Sam the hostler "not to let him go yet," dost thou believe that quadruped desires to go, and would go if he might! Who could repress a smile—of love for thee, Tom Pinch, and not in jest at thy expense, for thou art poor enough already, Heaven knows—to think that such a holiday as lies before thee, should awaken that quick flow and hurry of the spirits, in which thou settest down again, almost untasted, on the kitchen window-sill, that great white mug (put by, by thy own hands last night, that breakfast might not hold thee late), and layest yonder crust upon the seat beside thee to be eaten on the road, when thou art calmer in thy high rejoicing! Who, as thou drivest off a happy man, and noddest with a grateful lovingness to Pecksniff in his nightcap at his chamber-window, would not cry, "Heaven speed thee, Tom, and send that thou wert going off for ever to some quiet home where thou mightst live at peace, and sorrow should not touch thee!"

What better time for driving, riding, walking, moving through the air by any means, than a fresh, frosty morning, when hope runs cheerily through the veins with the brisk blood, and tingles in the frame from head to foot! This was the glad commencement of a bracing day in early winter, such as may put the languid summer season (speaking of it when it can't be

had) to the blush, and shame the spring for being sometimes cold by halves. The sheep-bells rang as clearly in the vigorous air, as if they felt its wholesome influence like living creatures; the trees, in lieu of leaves or blossoms, shed upon the ground a frosty rime that sparkled as it fell, and might have been the dust of diamonds—so it was, to Tom. From cottage chimneys, smoke went streaming up high, high, as if the earth had lost its grossness, being so fair, and must not be oppressed by heavy vapour. The crust of ice on the else rippling brook, was so transparent, and so thin in texture, that the lively water might, of its own free will, have stopped—in Tom's glad mind it had—to look upon the lovely morning. And lest the sun should break this charm too eagerly, there moved between him and the ground a mist like that which waits upon the moon on summer nights—the very same to Tom—and wooed him to dissolve it gently.

Tom Pinch went on; not fast, but with a sense of rapid motion, which did just as well; and as he went, all kinds of things occurred to keep him happy. Thus when he came within sight of the turnpike, and was—Oh a long way off!—he saw the tollman's wife, who had that moment checked a waggon, run back into the little house again like mad, to say (she knew) that Mr. Pinch was coming up. And she was right, for when he drew within hail of the gate, forth rushed the tollman's children, shrieking in tiny chorus, "Mr. Pinch!"—to Tom's intense delight. The very tollman, though an ugly chap in general, and one whom folks were rather shy of handling, came out himself to take the toll, and give him rough good morning: and that with all this, and a glimpse of the family breakfast on a little round table before the fire, the crust Tom Pinch had brought away with him acquired as rich a flavour as though it had been cut from off a fairy loaf.

But there was more than this. It was not only the married people and the children who gave Tom Pinch a welcome as he passed. No, no. Sparkling eyes and snowy breasts came hurriedly to many an upper casement as he clattered by, and gave him back his greeting: not stinted either, but sevenfold, good measure. They were all merry. They all laughed. And some of the wickedest among them even kissed their hands as Tom looked back. For who minded poor Mr. Pinch? There was no harm in *him*.

And now the morning grew so fair, and all things were so wide awake and gay, that the sun seeming to say—Tom had no doubt he

said—"I can't stand it any longer: I must have a look"—streamed out in radiant majesty. The mist, too shy and gentle for such lusty company, fled off, quite scared, before it; and as it swept away, the hills and mounds and distant pasture lands, teeming with placid sheep and noisy crows, came out as bright as though they were unrolled bran new for the occasion. In compliment to which discovery, the brook stood still no longer, but ran briskly off to bear the tidings to the water-mill, three miles away.

Mr. Pinch was jogging along, full of pleasant thoughts and cheerful influences, when he saw, upon the path before him, going in the same direction with himself, a traveller on foot, who walked with a light, quick step, and sang as he went—for certain in a very loud voice, but not unmusically. He was a young fellow of some five or six-and-twenty perhaps, and was dressed in such a free and fly-away fashion, that the long ends of his loose red neckcloth were streaming out behind him quite as often as before; and the bunch of bright winter berries in the button-hole of his velveteen coat, was as visible to Mr. Pinch's rearward observation, as if he had worn that garment wrong side foremost. He continued to sing with so much energy, that he did not hear the sound of wheels until it was close behind him; when he turned a whimsical face and very merry pair of blue eyes on Mr. Pinch, and checked himself directly.

"Why, Mark!" said Tom Pinch, stopping, "who'd have thought of seeing you here? Well! this is surprising!"

Mark touched his hat, and said, with a very sudden decrease of vivacity, that he was going to Salisbury.

"And how spruce you are, too!" said Mr. Pinch, surveying him with great pleasure. "Really I didn't think you were half such a tight-made fellow, Mark!"

"Thankee, Mr. Pinch. Pretty well for that, I believe. It's not my fault, you know. With regard to being spruce, sir, that's where it is, you see." And here he looked particularly gloomy.

"Where what is?" Mr. Pinch demanded.

"Where the aggravation of it is. Any man may be in good spirits and good temper when he's well dressed. There ain't much credit in that. If I was very ragged and very jolly, then I should begin to feel I had gained a point, Mr. Pinch."

"So you were singing just now, to bear up, as it were, against being well dressed, eh, Mark?" said Pinch.

"Your conversation's always equal to print,

sir," rejoined Mark, with a broad grin. "That was it."

"Well!" cried Pinch, "you are the strangest young man, Mark, I ever knew in my life. I always thought so; but now I am quite certain of it. I am going to Salisbury, too. Will you get in? I shall be very glad of your company."

The young fellow made his acknowledgments and accepted the offer; stepping into the carriage directly, and seating himself on the very edge of the seat with his body half out of it, to express his being there on sufferance, and by the politeness of Mr. Pinch. As they went along, the conversation proceeded after this manner.

"I more than half believed, just now, seeing you so very smart," said Pinch, "that you must be going to be married, Mark."

"Well, sir, I've thought of that, too," he replied. "There might be some credit in being jolly with a wife, 'specially if the children had the measles and that, and was very fractious indeed. But I'm a'most afraid to try it. I don't see my way clear."

"You're not very fond of anybody, perhaps?" said Pinch.

"Not particular, sir, I think."

"But the way would be, you know, Mark, according to your views of things," said Mr. Pinch, "to marry somebody you didn't like, and who was very disagreeable."

"So it would, sir, but that might be carrying out a principle a little too far, mightn't it?"

"Perhaps it might," said Mr. Pinch. At which they both laughed gaily.

"Lord bless you, sir," said Mark, "you don't half know me, though. I don't believe there ever was a man as could come out so strong under circumstances that would make other men miserable, as I could, if I could only get a chance. But I can't get a chance. It's my opinion, that nobody never will know half of what's in me, unless something very unexpected turns up. And I don't see any prospect of that. I'm a going to leave the Dragon, sir."

"Going to leave the Dragon!" cried Mr. Pinch, looking at him with great astonishment. "Why, Mark, you take my breath away!"

"Yes, sir," he rejoined, looking straight before him and a long way off, as men do sometimes when they cogitate profoundly. "What's the use of my stopping at the Dragon? It ain't at all the sort of place for *me*. When I left London (I'm a Kentish man by birth, though), and took that situation here, I quite made up my mind that it was the dullest little out-of-the-way corner in England, and that there would be

some credit in being jolly under such circumstances. But, Lord, there's no dulness at the Dragon! Skittles, cricket, quoits, nine-pins, comic songs, choruses, company round the chimney corner every winter's evening—any man could be jolly at the Dragon. There's no credit in *that*."

"But if common report be true for once, Mark, as I think it is, being able to confirm it by what I know myself," said Mr. Pinch, "you are the cause of half this merriment, and set it going."

"There may be something in that, too, sir," answered Mark. "But that's no consolation."

"Well!" said Mr. Pinch, after a short silence, his usually subdued tone being even more subdued than ever. "I can hardly think enough of what you tell me. Why, what will become of Mrs. Lupin, Mark?"

Mark looked more fixedly before him, and further off still, as he answered that he didn't suppose it would be much of an object to her. There were plenty of smart young fellows as would be glad of the place. He knew a dozen himself.

"That's probable enough," said Mr. Pinch, "but I am not at all sure that Mrs. Lupin would be glad of them. Why, I always supposed that Mrs. Lupin and you would make a match of it, Mark: and so did every one, as far as I know."

"I never," Mark replied, in some confusion, "said nothing as was in a direct way courting-like to her, nor she to me, but I don't know what I mightn't do one of these odd times, and what she mightn't say in answer. Well, sir, *that* wouldn't suit."

"Not to be landlord of the Dragon, Mark?" cried Mr. Pinch.

"No, sir, certainly not," returned the other, withdrawing his gaze from the horizon, and looking at his fellow-traveller. "Why, that would be the ruin of a man like me. I go and sit down comfortably for life, and no man never finds me out. What would be the credit of the landlord of the Dragon's being jolly? why, he couldn't help it, if he tried."

"Does Mrs. Lupin know you are going to leave her?" Mr. Pinch inquired.

"I haven't broke it to her yet, sir, but I must. I'm looking out this morning for something new and suitable," he said, nodding towards the city.

"What kind of thing now?" Mr. Pinch demanded.

"I was thinking," Mark replied, "of something in the grave-digging way."

"Good Gracious, Mark!" cried Mr. Pinch.

"It's a good damp, wormy sort of business, sir," said Mark, shaking his head, argumentatively, "and there might be some credit in being jolly, with one's mind in that pursuit, unless grave-diggers is usually given that way; which would be a drawback. You don't happen to know how that is, in general, do you, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Pinch, "I don't indeed. I never thought upon the subject."

"In case of that not turning out as well as one could wish, you know," said Mark, musing again, "there's other businesses. Undertaking now. That's gloomy. There might be credit to be gained there. A broker's man in a poor neighbourhood wouldn't be bad perhaps. A jailer sees a deal of misery. A doctor's man is in the very midst of murder. A bailiff's ain't a lively office nat'rally. Even a tax gatherer must find his feelings rather worked upon, at times. There's lots of trades, in which I should have an opportunity, I think."

Mr. Pinch was so perfectly overwhelmed by these remarks that he could do nothing but occasionally exchange a word or two on some indifferent subject, and cast sidelong glances at the bright face of his odd friend (who seemed quite unconscious of his observation), until they reached a certain corner of the road, close upon the outskirts of the city, when Mark said he would jump down there, if he pleased.

"But bless my soul, Mark," said Mr. Pinch, who in the progress of his observation just then made the discovery that the bosom of his companion's shirt was as much exposed as if it were midsummer, and was ruffled by every breath of air, "why don't you wear a waistcoat?"

"What's the good of one, sir?" asked Mark.

"Good of one?" said Mr. Pinch. "Why, to keep your chest warm."

"Lord love you, sir!" cried Mark; "you don't know me. *My* chest don't want no warming. Even if it did, what would no waistcoat bring it to? Inflammation of the lungs, perhaps? Well, there'd be some credit in being jolly, with an inflammation of the lungs."

As Mr. Pinch returned no other answer than such as was conveyed in his drawing his breath very hard, and opening his eyes very wide, and nodding his head very much, Mark thanked him for his ride, and without troubling him to stop, jumped lightly down. And away he fluttered, with his red neck-kerchief, and his open coat, down a cross-lane: turning back from time to time to nod to Mr. Pinch, and looking one of the most careless, good-humoured, comical fellows in life. His late companion, with a thoughtful face, pursued his way to Salisbury.

Mr. Pinch had a shrewd notion that Salisbury was a very desperate sort of place; an exceeding wild and dissipated city; and when he had put up the horse, and given the hostler to understand that he would look in again in the course of an hour or two to see him take his corn, he set forth on a stroll about the streets with a vague and not unpleasant idea that they teemed with all kinds of mystery and bedevilment. To one of his quiet habits this little delusion was greatly assisted by the circumstance of its being market-day, and the thoroughfares about the market-place being filled with carts, horses, donkeys, baskets, waggons, garden-stuff, meat, tripe, pies, poultry, and hucksters' wares of every opposite description and possible variety of character. Then there were young farmers and old farmers, with smock frocks, brown great-coats, drab great-coats, red worsted comforters, leather-leggings, wonderful shaped hats, hunting-whips, and rough sticks, standing about in groups, or talking noisily together on the tavern steps, or paying and receiving huge amounts of greasy wealth, with the assistance of such bulky pocket-books that when they were in their pockets it was apoplexy to get them out, and when they were out, it was spasms to get them in again. Also there were farmers' wives in beaver bonnets and red cloaks, riding shaggy horses purged of all earthly passions, who went soberly into all manner of places without desiring to know why, and who, if required, would have stood stock still in a china-shop, with a complete dinner-service at each hoof. Also a great many dogs, who were strongly interested in the state of the market and the bargains of their masters; and a great confusion of tongues, both brute and human.

Mr. Pinch regarded everything exposed for sale with great delight, and was particularly struck by the itinerant cutlery, which he considered of the very keenest kind, insomuch that he purchased a pocket knife with seven blades in it, and not a cut (as he afterwards found out) among them. When he had exhausted the market-place, and watched the farmers safe into the market dinner, he went back to look after the horse. Having seen him eat unto his heart's content, he issued forth again, to wander round the town and regale himself with the shop windows: previously taking a long stare at the bank, and wondering in what direction under-ground, the caverns might be, where they kept the money; and turning to look back at one or two young men who passed him, whom he knew to be articulated to solicitors in the town; and who had a sort of fearful interest in his eyes, as jolly

dogs who knew a thing or two, and kept it up tremendously.

But the shops. First of all, there were the jewellers' shops, with all the treasures of the earth displayed therein, and such large silver watches hanging up in every pane of glass, that if they were anything but first-rate goes it certainly was not because the works could decently complain of want of room. In good sooth they were big enough, and perhaps, as the saying is, ugly enough, to be the most correct of all mechanical performers; in Mr. Pinch's eyes, however, they were smaller than Geneva ware; and when he saw one very bloated watch announced as a repeater, gifted with the uncommon power of striking every quarter of an hour inside the pocket of its happy owner, he almost wished that he were rich enough to buy it.

But what were even gold and silver, precious stones and clockwork, to the bookshops, whence a pleasant smell of paper freshly pressed came issuing forth, awakening instant recollections of some new grammar had at school, long time ago, with "Master Pinch, Grove House Academy," inscribed in faultless writing on the fly-leaf! That whiff of russia leather, too, and all those rows on rows of volumes, neatly ranged within—what happiness did they suggest! And in the window were the spick-and-span new works from London, with the title-pages, and sometimes even the first page of the first chapter, laid wide open: tempting unwary men to begin to read the book, and then, in the impossibility of turning over, to rush blindly in and buy it! Here too were the dainty frontispiece and trim vignette, pointing like hand-posts on the outskirts of great cities, to the rich stock of incident beyond; and store of books, with many a grave portrait and time-honoured name, whose matter he knew well, and would have given mines to have, in any form, upon the narrow shelf beside his bed at Mr. Pecksniff's. What a heart-breaking shop it was!

There was another, not quite so bad at first, but still a trying shop; where children's books were sold, and where poor Robinson Crusoe stood alone in his might, with dog and hatchet, goat-skin cap and fowling-pieces; calmly surveying Philip Quarll and the host of imitators round him, and calling Mr. Pinch to witness that he, of all the crowd, impressed one solitary foot-print on the shore of boyish memory, whereof the tread of generations should not stir the lightest grain of sand. And there too were the Persian tales, with flying chests, and students of enchanted books shut up for years in caverns; and there too was Abudah, the mer-

chant, with the terrible little old woman hobbling out of the box in his bedroom : and there the mighty talisman—the rare Arabian Nights—with Cassim Baba, divided by four, like the ghost of a dreadful sun, hanging up, all gory, in the robbers' cave. Which matchless wonders, coming fast on Mr. Pinch's mind, did so rub up and chafe that wonderful lamp within him, that when he turned his face towards the busy street, a crowd of phantoms waited on his pleasure, and he lived again, with new delight, the happy days before the Pecksniff era.

He had less interest now in the chemists' shops, with their great glowing bottles (with smaller repositories of brightness in their very stoppers); and in their agreeable compromises between medicine and perfumery, in the shape of toothsome lozenges and virgin honey. Neither had he the least regard (but he never had much) for the tailors', where the newest metropolitan waistcoat patterns were hanging up, which by some strange transformation always looked amazing there, and never appeared at all like the same thing anywhere else. But he stopped to read the playbill at the theatre, and surveyed the doorway with a kind of awe, which was not diminished when a sallow gentleman with long dark hair came out, and told a boy to run home to his lodgings and bring down his broadsword. Mr. Pinch stood rooted to the spot, and might have stood there until dark, but that the old cathedral bell began to ring for vesper service, on which he tore himself away.

Now, the organist's assistant was a friend of Mr. Pinch's, which was a good thing, for he too was a very quiet, gentle soul, and had been, like Tom, a kind of old-fashioned boy at school, though well-liked by the noisy fellows too. As good luck would have it (Tom always said he had great good luck) the assistant chanced that very afternoon to be on duty by himself, with no one in the dusty organ-loft but Tom : so while he played, Tom helped him with the stops ; and finally, the service being just over, Tom took the organ himself. It was then turning dark, and the yellow light that streamed in through the ancient windows in the choir was mingled with a murky red. As the grand tones resounded through the church, they seemed, to Tom, to find an echo in the depth of every ancient tomb, no less than in the deep mystery of his own heart. Great thoughts and hopes came crowding on his mind as the rich music rolled upon the air, and yet among them—something more grave and solemn in their purpose, but the same—were all the images of that day, down to its very lightest recollection of childhood. The feeling

that the sounds awakened, in the moment of their existence, seemed to include his whole life and being ; and as the surrounding realities of stone and wood and glass grew dimmer in the darkness, these visions grew so much the brighter that Tom might have forgotten the new pupil and the expectant master, and have sat there pouring out his grateful heart till midnight, but for a very earthy old verger insisting on locking up the cathedral forthwith. So he took leave of his friend, with many thanks, groped his way out, as well as he could, into the now lamp-lighted streets, and hurried off to get his dinner.

All the farmers being by this time jogging homewards, there was nobody in the sanded parlour of the tavern where he had left the horse ; so he had his little table drawn out close before the fire, and fell to work upon a well-cooked steak and smoking hot potatoes, with a strong appreciation of their excellence, and a very keen sense of enjoyment. Beside him, too, there stood a jug of most stupendous Wiltshire beer ; and the effect of the whole was so transcendent, that he was obliged every now and then to lay down his knife and fork, rub his hands, and think about it. By the time the cheese and celery came, Mr. Pinch had taken a book out of his pocket, and could afford to trifle with the viands ; now eating a little, now drinking a little, now reading a little, and now stopping to wonder what sort of a young man the new pupil would turn out to be. He had passed from this latter theme and was deep in his book again, when the door opened, and another guest came in, bringing with him such a quantity of cold air, that he positively seemed at first to put the fire out.

"Very hard frost to-night, sir," said the newcomer, courteously acknowledging Mr. Pinch's withdrawal of the little table, that he might have place. "Don't disturb yourself, I beg."

Though he said this with a vast amount of consideration for Mr. Pinch's comfort, he dragged one of the great leather-bottomed chairs to the very centre of the hearth, notwithstanding ; and sat down in front of the fire, with a foot on each hob.

"My feet are quite numbed. Ah ! Bitter cold to be sure."

"You have been in the air some considerable time, I dare say?" said Mr. Pinch.

"All day. Outside a coach, too."

"That accounts for his making the room so cool," thought Mr. Pinch. "Poor fellow ! How thoroughly chilled he must be !"

The stranger became thoughtful, likewise, and sat for five or ten minutes looking at the fire in

silence. At length he rose and divested himself of his shawl and great-coat, which (far different from Mr. Pinch's) was a very warm and thick one; but he was not a whit more conversational out of his great-coat than in it, for he sat down again in the same place and attitude, and leaning back in his chair, began to bite his nails. He was young—one-and-twenty, perhaps—and handsome; with a keen dark eye, and a quickness of look and manner which made Tom sensible of a great contrast in his own bearing, and caused him to feel even more shy than usual.

There was a clock in the room, which the stranger often turned to look at. Tom made frequent reference to it also; partly from a nervous sympathy with its taciturn companion; and partly because the new pupil was to inquire for him at half after six, and the hands were getting on towards that hour. Whenever the stranger caught him looking at this clock, a kind of confusion came upon Tom as if he had been found out in something; and it was a perception of his uneasiness which caused the younger man to say, perhaps, with a smile:

"We both appear to be rather particular about the time. The fact is, I have an engagement to meet a gentleman here."

"So have I," said Mr. Pinch.

"At half-past six," said the stranger.

"At half-past six," said Tom in the very same breath; whereupon the other looked at him with some surprise.

"The young gentleman, I expect," remarked Tom, timidly, "was to inquire at that time for a person by the name of Pinch."

"Dear me!" cried the other, jumping up. "And I have been keeping the fire from you all this while! I had no idea you were Mr. Pinch. I am the Mr. Martin for whom you were to inquire. Pray excuse me. How do you do? Oh, do draw nearer, pray!"

"Thank you," said Tom, "thank you. I am not at all cold; and you are; and we have a cold ride before us. Well, if you wish it, I will. I—I am very glad," said Tom, smiling with an embarrassed frankness peculiarly his, and which was as plainly a confession of his own imperfections, and an appeal to the kindness of the person he addressed, as if he had drawn one up in simple language and committed it to paper: "I am very glad indeed that you turn out to be the party I expected. I was thinking, but a minute ago, that I could wish him to be like you."

"I am very glad to hear it," returned Martin, shaking hands with him again; "for I can assure

you, I was thinking there could be no such luck as Mr. Pinch's turning out like *you*."

"No, really!" said Tom, with great pleasure. "Are you serious?"

"Upon my word I am," replied his new acquaintance. "You and I will get on excellently well, I know; which it's no small relief to me to feel, for to tell you the truth, I am not at all the sort of fellow who could get on with everybody, and that's the point on which I had the greatest doubts. But they're quite relieved now.—Do me the favour to ring the bell, will you?"

Mr. Pinch rose, and complied with great alacrity—the handle hung just over Martin's head, as he warmed himself—and listened with a smiling face to what his friend went on to say. It was:

"If you like punch, you'll allow me to order a glass a-piece, as hot as it can be made, that we may usher in our friendship in a becoming manner. To let you into a secret, Mr. Pinch, I never was so much in want of something warm and cheering in my life; but I didn't like to run the chance of being found drinking it, without knowing what kind of person you were; for first impressions, you know, often go a long way, and last a long time."

Mr. Pinch assented, and the punch was ordered. In due course it came: hot and strong. After drinking to each other in the steaming mixture, they became quite confidential.

"I'm a sort of relation of Pecksniff's, you know," said the young man.

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Pinch.

"Yes. My grandfather is his cousin, so he's kith and kin to me, somehow, if you can make that out. I can't."

"Then Martin is your Christian name?" said Mr. Pinch, thoughtfully. "Oh!"

"Of course it is," returned his friend: "I wish it was my surname, for my own is not a very pretty one, and it takes a long time to sign. Chuzzlewit is my name."

"Dear me!" cried Mr. Pinch, with an involuntary start.

"You're not surprised at my having two names, I suppose?" returned the other, setting his glass to his lips. "Most people have."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Pinch, "not at all. Oh dear no! Well!" And then remembering that Mr. Pecksniff had privately cautioned him to say nothing in reference to the old gentleman of the same name who had lodged at the Dragon, but to reserve all mention of that person for him, he had no better means of hiding his con-

fusion, than by raising his own glass to his mouth. They looked at each other out of their respective tumblers for a few seconds, and then put them down empty.

"I told them in the stable to be ready for us ten minutes ago," said Mr. Pinch, glancing at the clock again. "Shall we go?"

"If you please," returned the other.

"Would you like to drive?" said Mr. Pinch; his whole face beaming with a consciousness of the splendour of his offer. "You shall, if you wish."

"Why, that depends, Mr. Pinch," said Martin, laughing, "upon what sort of horse you have. Because if he's a bad one, I would rather keep my hands warm by holding them comfortably in my great-coat pockets."

He appeared to think this such a good joke, that Mr. Pinch was quite sure it must be a capital one. Accordingly, he laughed too, and was fully persuaded that he enjoyed it very much. Then he settled his bill, and Mr. Chuzzlewit paid for the punch; and having wrapped themselves up, to the extent of their respective means, they went out together to the front door, where Mr. Pecksniff's property stopped the way.

"I won't drive, thank you, Mr. Pinch," said Martin, getting into the sinner's place. "By the bye, there's a box of mine. Can we manage to take it?"

"Oh, certainly," said Tom. "Put it in, Dick, anywhere!"

It was not precisely of that convenient size which would admit of its being squeezed into any odd corner, but Dick the hostler got it in somehow, and Mr. Chuzzlewit helped him. It was all on Mr. Pinch's side, and Mr. Chuzzlewit said he was very much afraid it would encumber him; to which Tom said, "Not at all:" though it forced him into such an awkward position, that he had much ado to see anything but his own knees. But it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good; and the wisdom of the saying was verified in this instance; for the cold air came from Mr. Pinch's side of the carriage, and by interposing a perfect wall of box and man between it and the new pupil, he shielded that young gentleman effectually: which was a great comfort.

It was a clear evening, with a bright moon. The whole landscape was silvered by its light and by the hoar-frost: and everything looked exquisitely beautiful. At first, the great serenity and peace through which they travelled, disposed them both to silence; but in a very short time the punch within them and the healthful air

without, made them loquacious, and they talked incessantly. When they were half-way home, and stopped to give the horse some water, Martin (who was very generous with his money) ordered another glass of punch, which they drank between them, and which had not the effect of making them less conversational than before. Their principal topic of discourse was naturally Mr. Pecksniff and his family; of whom, and of the great obligations they had heaped upon him, Tom Pinch, with the tears standing in his eyes, drew such a picture as would have inclined any one of common feeling almost to revere them: and of which Mr. Pecksniff had not the slightest foresight or preconceived idea, or he certainly (being very humble) would not have sent Tom Pinch to bring the pupil home.

In this way they went on, and on, and on—in the language of the story-books—until at last the village lights appeared before them, and the church spire cast a long reflection on the graveyard grass: as if it were a dial (alas, the truest in the world!) marking, whatever light shone out of Heaven, the flight of days and weeks and years, by some new shadow on that solemn ground.

"A pretty church!" said Martin, observing that his companion slackened the slack pace of the horse, as they approached.

"Is it not?" cried Tom, with great pride. "There's the sweetest little organ there you ever heard. I play it for them."

"Indeed?" said Martin. "It is hardly worth the trouble, I should think. What do you get for that, now?"

"Nothing," answered Tom.

"Well," returned his friend, "you *are* a very strange fellow!"

To which remark there succeeded a brief silence.

"When I say nothing," observed Mr. Pinch, cheerfully, "I am wrong, and don't say what I mean, because I get a great deal of pleasure from it, and the means of passing some of the happiest hours I know. It led to something else the other day—but you will not care to hear about that, I dare say?"

"Oh, yes, I shall. What?"

"It led to my seeing," said Tom, in a lower voice, "one of the loveliest and most beautiful faces you can possibly picture to yourself."

"And yet I am able to picture a beautiful one," said his friend thoughtfully, "or should be, if I have any memory."

"She came," said Tom, laying his hand upon the other's arm, "for the first time, very early in the morning, when it was hardly light; and

when I saw her, over my shoulder, standing just within the porch, I turned quite cold, almost believing her to be a spirit. A moment's reflection got the better of that of course, and fortunately it came to my relief so soon, that I didn't leave off playing."

"Why fortunately?"

"Why? Because she stood there, listening. I had my spectacles on, and saw her through the chinks in the curtains as plainly as I see you; and she was beautiful. After a while she glided off, and I continued to play until she was out of hearing."

"Why did you do that?"

"Don't you see?" responded Tom. "Because she might suppose I hadn't seen her; and might return."

"And did she?"

"Certainly she did. Next morning, and next evening too: but always when there were no people about, and always alone. I rose earlier, and sat there later, that when she came, she might find the church door open, and the organ playing, and might not be disappointed. She strolled that way for some days, and always stayed to listen. But she is gone now, and of



"'LET US BE MERRY.' HERE HE TOOK A CAPTAIN'S BISCUIT."

all unlikely things in this wide world, it is perhaps the most improbable that I shall ever look upon her face again."

"You don't know anything more about her?"

"No."

"And you never followed her when she went away?"

"Why should I distress her by doing that?" said Tom Pinch. "Is it likely that she wanted my company? She came to hear the organ, not to see me; and would you have had me scare her from a place she seemed to grow quite fond

of? Now, Heaven bless her!" cried Tom, "to have given her but a minute's pleasure every day, I would have gone on playing the organ at those times until I was an old man: quite contented if she sometimes thought of a poor fellow like me, as a part of the music; and more than recompensed if she ever mixed me up with anything she liked as well as she liked that!"

The new pupil was clearly very much amazed by Mr. Pinch's weakness, and would probably have told him so, and given him some good advice, but for their opportune arrival at Mr.

Pecksniff's door: the front door this time on account of the occasion being one of ceremony and rejoicing. The same man was in waiting for the horse who had been adjured by Mr. Pinch in the morning not to yield to his rabid desire to start; and after delivering the animal into his charge, and beseeching Mr. Chuzzlewit in a whisper never to reveal a syllable of what he had just told him in the fulness of his heart, Tom led the pupil in for instant presentation.

Mr. Pecksniff had clearly not expected them for hours to come: for he was surrounded by open books, and was glancing from volume to volume, with a black-lead pencil in his mouth, and a pair of compasses in his hand, at a vast number of mathematical diagrams, of such extraordinary shapes that they looked like designs for fireworks. Neither had Miss Charity expected them, for she was busied, with a capacious wicker basket before her, in making impracticable nightcaps for the poor. Neither had Miss Mercy expected them, for she was sitting upon her stool, tying on the—oh good gracious!—the petticoat of a large doll that she was dressing for a neighbour's child: really, quite a grown-up doll, which made it more confusing: and had its little bonnet dangling by the ribbon from one of her fair curls, to which she had fastened it, lest it should be lost, or sat upon. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to conceive a family so thoroughly taken by surprise as the Pecksniffs were, on this occasion.

"Bless my life!" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking up, and gradually exchanging his abstracted face for one of joyful recognition. "Here already! Martin, my dear boy, I am delighted to welcome you to my poor house!"

With this kind greeting, Mr. Pecksniff fairly took him to his arms, and patted him several times upon the back with his right hand the while, as if to express that his feelings during the embrace were too much for utterance.

"But here," he said, recovering, "are my daughters, Martin: my two only children, whom (if you ever saw them) you have not beheld—ah, these sad family divisions!—since you were infants together. Nay, my dears, why blush at being detected in your every-day pursuits? We had prepared to give you the reception of a visitor, Martin, in our little room of state," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling, "but I like this better—I like this better!"

Oh, blessed star of Innocence, wherever you may be, how did you glitter in your home of ether when the two Miss Pecksniffs put forth, each her lily hand, and gave the same, with

mantling cheeks, to Martin! How did you twinkle, as if fluttering with sympathy, when Mercy reminded of the bonnet in her hair, hid her fair face and turned her head aside: the while her gentle sister plucked it out, and smote her, with a sister's soft reproof, upon her buxom shoulder!

"And how," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning round after the contemplation of these passages, and taking Mr. Pinch in a friendly manner by the elbow, "how has our friend here used you, Martin?"

"Very well indeed, sir. We are on the best terms, I assure you."

"Old Tom Pinch!" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking on him with affectionate sadness. "Ah! It seems but yesterday that Thomas was a boy, fresh from a scholastic course. Yet years have passed, I think, since Thomas Pinch and I first walked the world together!"

Mr. Pinch could say nothing. He was too much moved. But he pressed his master's hand, and tried to thank him.

"And Thomas Pinch and I," said Mr. Pecksniff, in a deeper voice, "will walk it yet, in mutual faithfulness and friendship! And if it comes to pass that either of us be run over, in any of those busy crossings which divide the streets of life, the other will convey him to the hospital in Hope, and sit beside his bed in Bounty!"

"Well, well, well!" he added in a happier tone, as he shook Mr. Pinch's elbow, hard. "No more of this! Martin, my dear friend, that you may be at home within these walls, let me show you how we live, and where. Come!"

With that he took up a lighted candle, and, attended by his young relative, prepared to leave the room. At the door, he stopped.

"You'll bear us company, Tom Pinch?"

Ay, cheerfully, though it had been to death, would Tom have followed him: glad to lay down his life for such a man!

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff, opening the door of an opposite parlour, "is the little room of state, I mentioned to you. My girls have pride in it, Martin! This," opening another door, "is the little chamber in which my works (slight things at best) have been concocted. Portrait of myself by Spiller. Bust by Spoker. The latter is considered a good likeness. I seem to recognise something about the left-hand corner of the nose, myself."

Martin thought it was very like, but scarcely intellectual enough. Mr. Pecksniff observed that the same fault had been found with it before. It was remarkable it should have struck

his young relation too. He was glad to see he had an eye for art.

"Various books you observe," said Mr. Pecksniff, waving his hand towards the wall, "connected with our pursuit. I have scribbled myself, but have not yet published. Be careful how you come up-stairs. This," opening another door, "is my chamber. I read here when the family suppose I have retired to rest. Sometimes I injure my health, rather more than I can quite justify to myself, by doing so; but art is long and time is short. Every facility you see for jotting down crude notions, even here."

These latter words were explained by his pointing to a small round table on which were a lamp, divers sheets of paper, a piece of India rubber, and a case of instruments: all put ready, in case an architectural idea should come into Mr. Pecksniff's head in the night; in which event he would instantly leap out of bed, and fix it for ever.

Mr. Pecksniff opened another door on the same floor, and shut it again, all at once, as if it were a Blue Chamber. But before he had well done so, he looked smilingly around, and said "Why not?"

Martin couldn't say why not, because he didn't know anything at all about it. So Mr. Pecksniff answered himself, by throwing open the door, and saying:

"My daughters' room. A poor first-floor to us, but a bower to them. Very neat. Very airy. Plants you observe; hyacinths; books again; birds." These birds, by the bye, comprised in all one staggering old sparrow without a tail, which had been borrowed expressly from the kitchen. "Such trifles as girls love are here. Nothing more. Those who seek heartless splendour, would seek here in vain."

With that he led them to the floor above.

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff, throwing wide the door of the memorable two-pair front; "is a room where some talent has been developed, I believe. This is a room in which an idea for a steeple occurred to me, that I may one day give to the world. We work here, my dear Martin. Some architects have been bred in this room: a few, I think, Mr. Pinch?"

Tom fully assented; and, what is more, fully believed it.

"You see," said Mr. Pecksniff, passing the candle rapidly from roll to roll of paper, "some traces of our doings here. Salisbury Cathedral from the north. From the south. From the east. From the west. From the south-east. From the north-west. A bridge. An alms-house. A jail. A church. A powder-magazine. A wine-cellar.

A portico. A summer-house. An ice-house. Plans, elevations, sections, every kind of thing. And this," he added, having by this time reached another large chamber on the same story, with four little beds in it, "this is your room, of which Mr. Pinch here, is the quiet sharer. A southern aspect; a charming prospect; Mr. Pinch's little library, you perceive; everything agreeable and appropriate. If there is any additional comfort you would desire to have here at any time, pray mention it. Even to strangers—far less to you, my dear Martin—there is no restriction on that point."

It was undoubtedly true, and may be stated in corroboration of Mr. Pecksniff, that any pupil had the most liberal permission to mention anything in this way that suggested itself to his fancy. Some young gentlemen had gone on mentioning the very same thing for five years without ever being stopped.

"The domestic assistants," said Mr. Pecksniff, "sleep above; and that is all." After which, and listening complacently as he went, to the encomiums passed by his young friend on the arrangements generally, he led the way to the parlour again.

Here a great change had taken place: for festive preparations on a rather extensive scale were already completed, and the two Miss Pecksniffs were awaiting their return with hospitable looks. There were two bottles of currant wine—white and red; a dish of sandwiches (very long and very slim); another of apples; another of captain's biscuits (which are always a moist and jovial sort of viand); a plate of oranges cut up small and gritty; with powdered sugar, and a highly geological home-made cake. The magnitude of these preparations quite took away Tom Pinch's breath: for though the new pupils were usually let down softly, as one may say, particularly in the wine department, which had so many stages of declension, that sometimes a young gentleman was a whole fortnight in getting to the pump; still this was a banquet: a sort of Lord Mayor's feast in private life: a something to think of, and hold on by, afterwards.

To this entertainment, which, apart from its own intrinsic merits, had the additional choice quality that it was in strict keeping with the night, being both light and cool, Mr. Pecksniff besought the company to do full justice.

"Martin," he said, "will seat himself between you two, my dears, and Mr. Pinch will come by me. Let us drink to our new inmate, and may we be happy together! Martin, my dear friend, my love to you! Mr. Pinch, if you spare the bottle we shall quarrel."

And trying (in his regard for the feelings of the rest) to look as if the wine were not acid and didn't make him wink, Mr. Pecksniff did honour to his own toast.

"This," he said, in allusion to the party, not the wine, "is a mingling that repays one for much disappointment and vexation. Let us be merry." Here he took a captain's biscuit. "It is a poor heart that never rejoices; and our hearts are not poor. No!"

With such stimulants to merriment did he beguile the time, and do the honours of the table; while Mr. Pinch, perhaps to assure himself that what he saw and heard was holiday reality, and not a charming dream, ate of everything, and in particular disposed of the slim sandwiches to a surprising extent. Nor was he stinted in his draughts of wine; but on the contrary, remembering Mr. Pecksniff's speech, attacked the bottle with such vigour, that every time he filled his glass anew, Miss Charity, despite her amiable resolves, could not repress a fixed and stony glare, as if her eyes had rested on a ghost. Mr. Pecksniff also became thoughtful at those moments, not to say dejected: but, as he knew the vintage, it is very likely he may have been speculating on the probable condition of Mr. Pinch upon the morrow, and discussing within himself the best remedies for colic.

Martin and the young ladies were excellent friends already, and compared recollections of their childish days, to their mutual liveliness and entertainment. Miss Mercy laughed immensely at everything that was said; and sometimes, after glancing at the happy face of Mr. Pinch, was seized with such fits of mirth as brought her to the very confines of hysterics. But, for these bursts of gaiety, her sister, in her better sense, reproved her; observing, in an angry whisper, that it was far from being a theme for jest; and that she had no patience with the creature; though it generally ended in her laughing too—but much more moderately—and saying, that indeed it was a little too ridiculous and intolerable to be serious about.

At length it became high time to remember the first clause of that great discovery made by the ancient philosopher, for securing health, riches, and wisdom; the infallibility of which has been for generations verified by the enormous fortunes, constantly amassed by chimney-sweepers and other persons who get up early and go to bed betimes. The young ladies accordingly rose, and having taken leave of Mr. Chuzzlewit with much sweetness, and of their father with much duty, and of Mr. Pinch with much condescension, retired to their bower. Mr. Peck-

sniff insisted on accompanying his young friend up-stairs, for personal superintendence of his comforts; and taking him by the arm, conducted him once more to his bedroom, followed by Mr. Pinch, who bore the light.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, seating himself with folded arms on one of the spare beds. "I don't see any snuffers in that candlestick. Will you oblige me by going down, and asking for a pair?"

Mr. Pinch, only too happy to be useful, went off directly.

"You will excuse Thomas Pinch's want of polish, Martin," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a smile of patronage and pity, as soon as he had left the room. "He means well."

"He is a very good fellow, sir."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Yes. Thomas Pinch means well. He is very grateful. I have never regretted having befriended Thomas Pinch."

"I should think you never would, sir."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff. "No. I hope not. Poor fellow, he is always disposed to do his best; but he is not gifted. You will make him useful to you, Martin, if you please. If Thomas has a fault, it is that he is sometimes a little apt to forget his position. But that is soon checked. Worthy soul! You will find him easy to manage. Good night!"

"Good night, sir."

By this time Mr. Pinch had returned with the snuffers

"And good night to *you*, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "And sound sleep to you both. Bless you! Bless you!"

Invoking this benediction on the heads of his young friends with great fervour, he withdrew to his own room; while they, being tired, soon fell asleep. If Martin dreamed at all, some clue to the matter of his visions may possibly be gathered from the after-pages of this history. Those of Thomas Pinch were all of holidays, church organs, and seraphic Pecksniffs. It was some time before Mr. Pecksniff dreamed at all, or even sought his pillow, as he sat for full two hours before the fire in his own chamber, looking at the coals and thinking deeply. But he, too, slept and dreamed at last. Thus in the quiet hours of the night, one house shuts in as many incoherent and incongruous fancies as a madman's head.

CHAPTER VI.

COMPRISES, AMONG OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS, PECKSNIFFIAN AND ARCHITECTURAL, AN EXACT RELATION OF THE PROGRESS MADE BY MR. PINCH IN THE CONFIDENCE AND FRIENDSHIP OF THE NEW PUPIL.

IT was morning ; and the beautiful Aurora, of whom so much hath been written, said, and sung, did, with her rosy fingers, nip and tweak Miss Pecksniff's nose. It was the frolicsome custom of the Goddess, in her intercourse with the fair Cherry, so to do ; or in more prosaic phrase, the tip of that feature in the sweet girl's countenance, was always very red at breakfast-time. For the most part, indeed, it wore, at that season of the day, a scraped and frosty look, as if it had been rasped ; while a similar phenomenon developed itself in her humour, which was then observed to be of a sharp and acid quality, as though an extra lemon (figuratively speaking) had been squeezed into the nectar of her disposition, and had rather damaged its flavour.

This additional pungency on the part of the fair young creature led, on ordinary occasions, to such slight consequences as the copious dilution of Mr. Pinch's tea, or to his coming off uncommonly short in respect of butter, or to other the like results. But on the morning after the Installation Banquet, she suffered him to wander to and fro among the eatables and drinkables, a perfectly free and unchecked man ; so utterly to Mr. Pinch's wonder and confusion, that like the wretched captive who recovered his liberty in his old age, he could make but little use of his enlargement, and fell into a strange kind of flutter for want of some kind hand to scrape his bread, and cut him off in the article of sugar with a lump, and pay him those other little attentions to which he was accustomed. There was something almost awful, too, about the self-possession of the new pupil ; who "troubled" Mr. Pecksniff for the loaf, and helped himself to a rasher of that gentleman's own particular and private bacon, with all the coolness in life. He even seemed to think that he was doing quite a regular thing, and to expect that Mr. Pinch would follow his example, since he took occasion to observe of that young man "that he didn't get on : " a speech of so tremendous a character, that Tom cast down his eyes involuntarily, and felt as if he himself had committed some horrible deed and heinous breach of Mr. Pecksniff's confidence. Indeed, the

agony of having such an indiscreet remark addressed to him before the assembled family, was breakfast enough in itself, and would, without any other matter of reflection, have settled Mr. Pinch's business and quenched his appetite, for one meal, though he had been never so hungry.

The young ladies, however, and Mr. Pecksniff likewise, remained in the very best of spirits in spite of these severe trials, though with something of a mysterious understanding among themselves. When the meal was nearly over, Mr. Pecksniff smilingly explained the cause of their common satisfaction.

"It is not often," he said, "Martin, that my daughters and I desert our quiet home to pursue the giddy round of pleasures that revolves abroad. But we think of doing so to-day."

"Indeed, sir !" cried the new pupil.

"Yes," said Mr. Pecksniff, tapping his left hand with a letter which he held in his right. "I have a summons here to repair to London ; on professional business, my dear Martin ; strictly on professional business ; and I promised my girls, long ago, that whenever that happened again, they should accompany me. We shall go forth to-night by the heavy coach—like the dove of old, my dear Martin—and it will be a week before we again deposit our olive-branches in the passage. When I say olive-branches," observed Mr. Pecksniff, in explanation, "I mean, our unpretending luggage."

"I hope the young ladies will enjoy their trip," said Martin.

"Oh ! that I'm sure we shall !" cried Mercy, clapping her hands. "Good gracious, Cherry, my darling, the idea of London !"

"Ardent child !" said Mr. Pecksniff, gazing on her in a dreamy way. "And yet there is a melancholy sweetness in these youthful hopes ! It is pleasant to know that they never can be realised. I remember thinking once myself, in the days of my childhood, that pickled onions grew on trees, and that every elephant was born with an impregnable castle on his back. I have not found the fact to be so ; far from it ; and yet those visions have comforted me under circumstances of trial. Even when I have had the anguish of discovering that I have nourished in my breast an ostrich, and not a human pupil—even in that hour of agony, they have soothed me."

At this dread allusion to John Westlock, Mr. Pinch precipitately choked in his tea ; for he had that very morning received a letter from him, as Mr. Pecksniff very well knew.

"You will take care, my dear Martin," said

Mr. Pecksniff, resuming his former cheerfulness, "that the house does not run away in our absence. We leave you in charge of everything. There is no mystery; all is free and open. Unlike the young man in the Eastern tale—who is described as a one-eyed almanack, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Pinch?"—

"A one-eyed calender, I think, sir," faltered Tom.

"They are pretty nearly the same thing, I believe," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling compassionately; "or they used to be in my time. Unlike that young man, my dear Martin, you are forbidden to enter no corner of this house; but are requested to make yourself perfectly at home in every part of it. You will be jovial, my dear Martin, and will kill the fatted calf if you please!"

There was not the least objection, doubtless, to the young man's slaughtering and appropriating to his own use any calf, fat or lean, that he might happen to find upon the premises; but as no such animal chanced at that time to be grazing on Mr. Pecksniff's estate, this request must be considered rather as a polite compliment than a substantial hospitality. It was the finishing ornament of the conversation; for when he had delivered it, Mr. Pecksniff rose, and led the way to that hotbed of architectural genius, the two-pair front.

"Let me see," he said, searching among the papers, "how you can best employ yourself, Martin, while I am absent. Suppose you were to give me your idea of a monument to a Lord Mayor of London; or a tomb for a sheriff; or your notion of a cow-house to be erected in a nobleman's park. Do you know, now," said Mr. Pecksniff, folding his hands, and looking at his young relation with an air of pensive interest, "that I should very much like to see your notion of a cow-house?"

But Martin by no means appeared to relish this suggestion.

"A pump," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is very chaste practice. I have found that a lamp-post is calculated to refine the mind and give it a classical tendency. An ornamental turnpike has a remarkable effect upon the imagination. What do you say to beginning with an ornamental turnpike?"

"Whatever Mr. Pecksniff pleased," said Martin, doubtfully.

"Stay," said that gentleman. "Come! as you're ambitious, and are a very neat draughtsman, you shall—ha ha!—you shall try your hand on these proposals for a grammar-school: regulating your plan, of course, by the printed

particulars. Upon my word, now," said Mr. Pecksniff, merrily, "I shall be very curious to see what you make of the grammar-school. Who knows but a young man of your taste might hit upon something, impracticable and unlikely in itself, but which I could put into shape? For it really is, my dear Martin, it really is in the finishing touches alone, that great experience and long study in these matters tell. Ha, ha, ha! Now it really will be," continued Mr. Pecksniff, clapping his young friend on the back in his droll humour, "an amusement to me, to see what you make of the grammar-school."

Martin readily undertook this task, and Mr. Pecksniff forthwith proceeded to entrust him with the materials necessary for its execution: dwelling meanwhile on the magical effect of a few finishing touches from the hand of a master; which, indeed, as some people said (and these were the old enemies again!) was unquestionably very surprising, and almost miraculous; as there were cases on record in which the masterly introduction of an additional back window, or a kitchen door, or half-a-dozen steps, or even a water spout, had made the design of a pupil Mr. Pecksniff's own work, and had brought substantial rewards into that gentleman's pocket. But such is the magic of genius, which changes all it handles into gold!

"When your mind requires to be refreshed, by change of occupation," said Mr. Pecksniff, "Thomas Pinch will instruct you in the art of surveying the back garden, or in ascertaining the dead level of the road between this house and the finger-post, or in any other practical and pleasing pursuit. There are a cart-load of loose bricks, and a score or two of old flower-pots, in the back-yard. If you could pile them up, my dear Martin, into any form which would remind me on my return—say of St. Peter's at Rome, or the Mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople—it would be at once improving to you and agreeable to my feelings. And now," said Mr. Pecksniff, in conclusion, "to drop, for the present, our professional relations and advert to private matters, I shall be glad to talk with you in my own room, while I pack up my portmanteau."

Martin attended him; and they remained in secret conference together for an hour or more; leaving Tom Pinch alone. When the young man returned, he was very taciturn and dull, in which state he remained all day; so that Tom, after trying him once or twice with indifferent conversation, felt a delicacy in obtruding himself upon his thoughts, and said no more.

He would not have had leisure to say much, had his new friend been ever so loquacious: for first of all Mr. Pecksniff called him down to stand upon the top of his portmanteau and represent ancient statues there, until such time as it would consent to be locked; and then Miss Charity called him to come and cord her trunk: and then Miss Mercy sent for him to come and mend her box; and then he wrote the fullest possible cards for all the luggage; and then he volunteered to carry it all downstairs; and after that to see it safely carried on a couple of barrows to the old finger-post at the end of the lane; and then to mind it till the coach came up. In short, his day's work would have been a pretty heavy one for a porter, but his thorough good-will made nothing of it; and as he sat upon the luggage at last, waiting for the Pecksniffs, escorted by the new pupil, to come down the lane, his heart was light with the hope of having pleased his benefactor.

"I was almost afraid," said Tom, taking a letter from his pocket, and wiping his face, for he was hot with bustling about though it was a cold day, "that I shouldn't have had time to write it, and that would have been a thousand pities: postage from such a distance being a serious consideration, when one's not rich. She will be glad to see my hand, poor girl, and to hear that Pecksniff is as kind as ever. I would have asked John Westlock to call and see her, and tell her all about me by word of mouth, but I was afraid he might speak against Pecksniff to her, and make her uneasy. Besides, they are particular people where she is, and it might have rendered her situation uncomfortable if she had had a visit from a young man like John. Poor Ruth!"

Tom Pinch seemed a little disposed to be melancholy for half a minute or so, but he found comfort very soon, and pursued his ruminations thus:

"I'm a nice man, I don't think, as John used to say (John was a kind, merry-hearted fellow: I wish he had liked Pecksniff better) to be feeling low on account of the distance between us, when I ought to be thinking, instead, of my extraordinary good-luck in having ever got here. I must have been born with a silver spoon in my mouth, I am sure, to have ever come across Pecksniff. And here have I fallen again into my usual good-luck with the new pupil! Such an affable, generous, free fellow, as he is, I never saw. Why, we were companions directly! and he a relation of Pecksniff's too, and a clever, dashing youth who might cut his way through the world as if it

were a cheese! Here he comes while the words are on my lips," said Tom; "walking down the lane as if the lane belonged to him."

In truth, the new pupil, not at all disconcerted by the honour of having Miss Mercy Pecksniff on his arm, or by the affectionate adieux of that young lady, approached as Mr. Pinch spoke, followed by Miss Charity and Mr. Pecksniff. As the coach appeared at the same moment, Tom lost no time in entreating the gentleman last mentioned, to undertake the delivery of his letter.

"Oh!" said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing at the superscription. "For your sister, Thomas. Yes, oh yes, it shall be delivered, Mr. Pinch. Make your mind easy upon that score. She shall certainly have it, Mr. Pinch."

He made the promise with so much condescension and patronage, that Tom felt he had asked a great deal (this had not occurred to his mind before), and thanked him earnestly. The Miss Pecksniffs, according to a custom they had, were amused beyond description, at the mention of Mr. Pinch's sister. Oh the fright! The bare idea of a Miss Pinch! Good heavens!

Tom was greatly pleased to see them so merry, for he took it as a token of their favour, and good-humoured regard. Therefore he laughed too and rubbed his hands, and wished them a pleasant journey and safe return, and was quite brisk. Even when the coach had rolled away with the olive-branches in the boot and the family of doves inside, he stood waving his hand and bowing: so much gratified by the unusually courteous demeanour of the young ladies, that he was quite regardless, for the moment, of Martin Chuzzlewit, who stood leaning thoughtfully against the finger-post, and who after disposing of his fair charge had hardly lifted his eyes from the ground.

The perfect silence which ensued upon the bustle and departure of the coach, together with the sharp air of the wintry afternoon, roused them both at the same time. They turned, as by mutual consent, and moved off, arm-in-arm.

"How melancholy you are!" said Tom; "what is the matter?"

"Nothing worth speaking of," said Martin. "Very little more than was the matter yesterday, and much more, I hope, than will be the matter to-morrow. I'm out of spirits, Pinch."

"Well," cried Tom, "now do you know I am in capital spirits to-day, and scarcely ever felt more disposed to be good company. It was a very kind thing in your predecessor, John, to write to me, was it not?"

"Why, yes," said Martin carelessly: "I should have thought he would have had enough to do to enjoy himself, without thinking of you, Pinch."

"Just what I felt to be so very likely, Tom rejoined: "but no, he keeps his word, and says, 'My dear Pinch, I often think of you,' and all sorts of kind and considerate things of that description."

"He must be a devilish good-natured fellow," said Martin, somewhat peevishly: "because he can't mean that, you know."

"I don't suppose he can, eh?" said Tom, looking wistfully in his companion's face. "He says so to please me, you think?"

"Why, is it likely," rejoined Martin, with greater earnestness, "that a young man newly escaped from this kennel of a place, and fresh to all the delights of being his own master in London, can have much leisure or inclination to think favourably of anything or anybody he has left behind him here? I put it to you, Pinch, is it natural?"

After a short reflection, Mr. Pinch replied, in a more subdued tone, that to be sure it was unreasonable to expect any such thing, and that he had no doubt Martin knew best.

"Of course I know best," Martin observed.

"Yes, I feel that," said Mr. Pinch, mildly. "I said so." And when he had made this rejoinder, they fell into a blank silence again, which lasted until they reached home; by which time it was dark.

Now, Miss Charity Pecksniff, in consideration of the inconvenience of carrying them with her in the coach, and the impossibility of preserving them by artificial means until the family's return, had set forth, in a couple of plates, the fragments of yesterday's feast. In virtue of which liberal arrangement, they had the happiness to find awaiting them in the parlour two chaotic heaps of the remains of last night's pleasure, consisting of certain filmy bits of oranges, some mummied sandwiches, various disrupted masses of the geological cake, and several entire captain's biscuits. That choice liquor in which to steep these dainties might not be wanting, the remains of the two bottles of currant wine had been poured together and corked with a curl-paper; so that every material was at hand for making quite a heavy night of it.

Martin Chuzzlewit beheld these roosting preparations with infinite contempt, and stirring the fire into a blaze (to the great destruction of Mr. Pecksniff's coals), sat moodily down before it, in the most comfortable chair he could find. That he might the better squeeze himself into

the small corner that was left for him, Mr. Pinch took up his position on Miss Mercy Pecksniff's stool, and setting his glass down upon the hearth-rug and putting his plate upon his knees, began to enjoy himself.

If Diogenes coming to life again could have rolled himself, tub and all, into Mr. Pecksniff's parlour, and could have seen Tom Pinch as he sat on Mercy Pecksniff's stool with his plate and glass before him, he could not have faced it out, though in his surliest mood, but must have smiled good-temperedly. The perfect and entire satisfaction of Tom; his surpassing appreciation of the husky sandwiches, which crumbled in his mouth like sawdust; the unspeakable relish with which he swallowed the thin wine by drops, and smacked his lips, as though it were so rich and generous that to lose an atom of its fruity flavour were a sin; the look with which he paused sometimes, with his glass in his hand, proposing silent toasts to himself; and the anxious shade that came upon his contented face when after wandering round the room, exulting in its uninvaded snugness, his glance encountered the dull brow of his companion; no cynic in the world, though in his hatred of its men a very griffin, could have withstood these things in Thomas Pinch.

Some men would have slapped him on the back, and pledged him in a bumper of the currant wine, though it had been the sharpest vinegar—ay, and liked its flavour too; some would have seized him by his honest hand, and thanked him for the lesson that his simple nature taught them. Some would have laughed with, and others would have laughed at him; of which last class was Martin Chuzzlewit, who, unable to restrain himself at last, laughed loud and long.

"That's right," said Tom, nodding approvingly. "Cheer up! That's capital!"

At which encouragement, young Martin laughed again: and said, as soon as he had breath and gravity enough:

"I never saw such a fellow as you are, Pinch."

"Didn't you though?" said Tom. "Well, it's very likely you do find me strange, because I have hardly seen anything of the world, and you have seen a good deal I dare say?"

"Pretty well for my time of life," rejoined Martin, drawing his chair still nearer to the fire, and spreading his feet out on the fender. "Duce take it, I must talk openly to somebody. I'll talk openly to you, Pinch."

"Do!" said Tom. "I shall take it as being very friendly of you."

"I'm not in your way, am I?" inquired Martin, glancing down at Mr. Pinch, who was by this time looking at the fire over his leg.

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"You must know then, to make short of a long story," said Martin, beginning with a kind of effort, as if the revelation were not agreeable to him: "that I have been bred up from childhood with great expectations, and have always been taught to believe that I should be, one day, very rich. So I should have been, but for

certain brief reasons which I am going to tell you, and which have led to my being disinherited."

"By your father?" inquired Mr. Pinch, with open eyes.

"By my grandfather. I have had no parents these many years. Scarcely within my remembrance."

"Neither have I," said Tom, touching the young man's hand with his own and timidly withdrawing it again. "Dear me!"



"OH CHIV, CHIV," MURMURED MR. TIGG, "YOU HAVE A NOBLY INDEPENDENT NATURE, CHIV."

"Why as to that you know, Pinch," pursued the other, stirring the fire again, and speaking in his rapid, off-hand way: "it's all very right and proper to be fond of parents when we have them, and to bear them in remembrance after they're dead, if you have ever known anything of them. But as I never did know anything about mine personally, you know, why I can't be expected to be very sentimental about 'em. And I am not: that's the truth."

Mr. Pinch was just then looking thoughtfully

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 4.

at the bars. But on his companion pausing in this place, he started, and said, "Oh! of course"—and composed himself to listen again.

"In a word," said Martin, "I have been bred and reared all my life by this grandfather of whom I have just spoken. Now, he has a great many good points; there is no doubt about that; I'll not disguise the fact from you; but he has two very great faults, which are the staple of his bad side. In the first place, he has the most confirmed obstinacy of character you

ever met with in any human creature. In the second, he is most abominably selfish."

"Is he indeed?" cried Tom.

"In those two respects," returned the other, "there never was such a man. I have often heard from those who know, that they have been, time out of mind, the failings of our family; and I believe there's some truth in it. But I can't say of my own knowledge. All I have to do, you know, is to be very thankful that they haven't descended to me, and to be very careful that I don't contract 'em."

"To be sure," said Mr. Pinch. "Very proper."

"Well, sir," resumed Martin, stirring the fire once more, and drawing his chair still closer to it, "his selfishness makes him exacting, you see; and his obstinacy makes him resolute in his exactions. The consequence is that he has always exacted a great deal from me in the way of respect, and submission, and self-denial when his wishes were in question, and so forth. I have borne a great deal from him, because I have been under obligations to him (if one can ever be said to be under obligations to one's own grandfather), and because I have been really attached to him; but we have had a great many quarrels for all that, for I could not accommodate myself to his ways very often—not out of the least reference to myself you understand, but because——" he stammered here, and was rather at a loss.

Mr. Pinch being about the worst man in the world to help anybody out of a difficulty of this sort, said nothing.

"Well! as you understand me," resumed Martin, quickly, "I needn't hunt for the precise expression I want. Now, I come to the cream of my story, and the occasion of my being here. I am in love, Pinch."

Mr. Pinch looked up into his face with increased interest.

"I say I am in love. I am in love with one of the most beautiful girls the sun ever shone upon. But she is wholly and entirely dependent upon the pleasure of my grandfather; and if he were to know that she favoured my passion, she would lose her home and everything she possesses in the world. There is nothing very selfish in *that* love, I think?"

"Selfish!" cried Tom. "You have acted nobly. To love her as I am sure you do, and yet in consideration for her state of dependence, not even to disclose——"

"What are you talking about, Pinch?" said Martin pettishly: "don't make yourself ridiculous, my good fellow! What do you mean by not disclosing?"

"I beg your pardon," answered Tom. "I thought you meant that, or I wouldn't have said it."

"If I didn't tell her I loved her, where would be the use of my being in love?" said Martin: "unless to keep myself in a perpetual state of worry and vexation?"

"That's true," Tom answered. "Well! I can guess what *she* said when you told her," he added, glancing at Martin's handsome face.

"Why, not exactly, Pinch," he rejoined, with a slight frown: "because she has some girlish notions about duty and gratitude, and all the rest of it, which are rather hard to fathom; but in the main you are right. Her heart was mine, I found."

"Just what I supposed," said Tom. "Quite natural!" and, in his great satisfaction, he took a long sip out of his wine-glass.

"Although I had conducted myself from the first with the utmost circumspection," pursued Martin, "I had not managed matters so well but that my grandfather, who is full of jealousy and distrust, suspected me of loving her. He said nothing to her, but straightway attacked me in private, and charged me with designing to corrupt the fidelity to himself (there you observe his selfishness), of a young creature whom he had trained and educated to be his only disinterested and faithful companion when he should have disposed of me in marriage to his heart's content. Upon that, I took fire immediately, and told him that with his good leave I would dispose of myself in marriage, and would rather not be knocked down by him or any other auctioneer to any bidder whomsoever."

Mr. Pinch opened his eyes wider and looked at the fire harder than he had done yet.

"You may be sure," said Martin, "that this nettled him, and that he began to be the very reverse of complimentary to myself. Interview succeeded interview; words engendered words, as they always do; and the upshot of it was, that I was to renounce her, or be renounced by him. Now you must bear in mind, Pinch, that I am not only desperately fond of her (for though she is poor, her beauty and intellect would reflect great credit on anybody, I don't care of what pretensions, who might become her husband), but that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined——"

"Obstinacy," suggested Tom in perfect good faith. But the suggestion was not so well received as he had expected; for the young man immediately rejoined, with some irritation,

"What a fellow you are, Pinch!"

"I beg your pardon," said Tom, "I thought you wanted a word."

"I didn't want that word," he rejoined. "I told you obstinacy was no part of my character, did I not? I was going to say, if you had given me leave, that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined firmness."

"Oh!" cried Tom, screwing up his mouth, and nodding. "Yes, yes; I see!"

"And being firm," pursued Martin, "of course I was not going to yield to him, or give way by so much as the thousandth part of an inch."

"No, no," said Tom.

"On the contrary; the more he urged, the more I was determined to oppose him."

"To be sure!" said Tom.

"Very well," rejoined Martin, throwing himself back in his chair, with a careless wave of both hands, as if the subject were quite settled, and nothing more could be said about it—"There is an end of the matter, and here am I!"

Mr. Pinch sat staring at the fire for some minutes with a puzzled look, such as he might have assumed if some uncommonly difficult conundrum had been proposed, which he found it impossible to guess. At length he said:

"Pecksniff, of course, you had known before?"

"Only by name. No, I had never seen him, for my grandfather kept not only himself but me, aloof from all his relations. But our separation took place in a town in the adjoining county. From that place I came to Salisbury, and there I saw Pecksniff's advertisement, which I answered, having always had some natural taste, I believe, in the matters to which it referred, and thinking it might suit me. As soon as I found it to be his, I was doubly bent on coming to him if possible, on account of his being—"

"Such an excellent man," interposed Tom, rubbing his hands: "so he is. You were quite right."

"Why not so much on that account, if the truth must be spoken," returned Martin, "as because my grandfather has an inveterate dislike to him, and after the old man's arbitrary treatment of me I had a natural desire to run as directly counter to all his opinions as I could. Well! as I said before, here I am. My engagement with the young lady I have been telling you about, is likely to be a tolerably long one; for neither her prospects, nor mine, are very bright; and of course I shall not think of marrying until I am well able to do so. It would never do, you know, for me to be plunging myself into poverty and shabbiness and love in

one room up three pair of stairs, and all that sort of thing."

"To say nothing of her," remarked Tom Pinch, in a low voice.

"Exactly so," rejoined Martin, rising to warm his back, and leaning against the chimney-piece. "To say nothing of her. At the same time, of course it's not very hard upon her to be obliged to yield to the necessity of the case: first, because she loves me very much; and secondly, because I have sacrificed a great deal on her account, and might have done much better, you know."

It was a very long time before Tom said "Certainly;" so long, that he might have taken a nap in the interval, but he did say it at last.

"Now, there is one odd coincidence connected with this love-story," said Martin, "which brings it to an end. You remember what you told me last night as we were coming here, about your pretty visitor in the church?"

"Surely I do," said Tom, rising from his stool, and seating himself in the chair from which the other had lately risen, that he might see his face. "Undoubtedly."

"That was she."

"I knew what you were going to say," cried Tom, looking fixedly at him, and speaking very softly. "You don't tell me so?"

"That was she," repeated the young man. "After what I have heard from Pecksniff, I have no doubt that she came and went with my grandfather.—Don't you drink too much of that sour wine, or you'll have a fit of some sort, Pinch, I see."

"It is not very wholesome, I am afraid," said Tom, setting down the empty glass he had for some time held. "So that was she, was it?"

Martin nodded assent: and adding, with a restless impatience, that if he had been a few days earlier he would have seen her; and that now she might be, for anything he knew, hundreds of miles away; threw himself, after a few turns across the room, into a chair, and chafed like a spoiled child.

Tom Pinch's heart was very tender, and he could not bear to see the most indifferent person in distress; still less one who had awakened an interest in him, and who regarded him (either in fact, or as he supposed) with kindness, and in a spirit of lenient construction. Whatever his own thoughts had been a few moments before—and to judge from his face they must have been pretty serious—he dismissed them instantly, and gave his young friend the best counsel and comfort that occurred to him.

"All will be well in time," said Tom, "I have no doubt; and some trial and adversity just now will only serve to make you more attached to each other in better days. I have always read that the truth is so, and I have a feeling within me, which tells me how natural and right it is that it should be. What never ran smooth yet," said Tom, with a smile, which despite the homeliness of his face, was pleasanter to see than many a proud beauty's brightest glance: "what never ran smooth yet, can hardly be expected to change its character for us; so we must take it as we find it, and fashion it into the very best shape we can, by patience and good-humour. I have no power at all; I needn't tell you that; but I have an excellent will; and if I could ever be of use to you, in any way whatever, how very glad I should be!"

"Thank you," said Martin, shaking his hand. "You're a good fellow, upon my word, and speak very kindly. Of course you know," he added, after a moment's pause, as he drew his chair towards the fire again, "I should not hesitate to avail myself of your services if you could help me at all; but mercy on us!"—Here he rumbled his hair impatiently with his hand, and looked at Tom as if he took it rather ill that he was not somebody else—"You might as well be a toasting-fork or a frying-pan, Pinch, for any help you can render me."

"Except in the inclination," said Tom, gently.

"Oh! to be sure. I meant that, of course. If inclination went for anything, I shouldn't want help. I tell you what you may do, though, if you will—at the present moment too."

"What is that?" demanded Tom.

"Read to me."

"I shall be delighted," cried Tom, catching up the candle, with enthusiasm. "Excuse my leaving you in the dark a moment, and I'll fetch a book directly. What will you like? Shakspeare?"

"Ay!" replied his friend, yawning and stretching himself. "He'll do. I am tired with the bustle of to-day, and the novelty of everything about me; and in such a case, there's no greater luxury in the world, I think, than being read to sleep. You won't mind my going to sleep, if I can?"

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"Then begin as soon as you like. You needn't leave off when you see me getting drowsy (unless you feel tired), for it's pleasant to wake gradually to the sounds again. Did you ever try that?"

"No, I never tried that," said Tom.

"Well! You can, you know, one of these days when we're both in the right humour. Don't mind leaving me in the dark. Look sharp!"

Mr. Pinch lost no time in moving away; and in a minute or two returned with one of the precious volumes from the shelf beside his bed. Martin had in the meantime made himself as comfortable as circumstances would permit, by constructing before the fire a temporary sofa of three chairs with Mercy's stool for a pillow, and lying down at full-length upon it.

"Don't be too loud, please," he said to Pinch.

"No, no," said Tom.

"You're sure you're not cold?"

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"I am quite ready, then."

Mr. Pinch accordingly, after turning over the leaves of his book with as much care as if they were living and highly cherished creatures, made his own selection, and began to read. Before he had completed fifty lines, his friend was snoring.

"Poor fellow!" said Tom, softly, as he stretched out his head to peep at him over the backs of the chairs. "He is very young to have so much trouble. How trustful and generous in him to bestow all this confidence in me. And that was she, was it?"

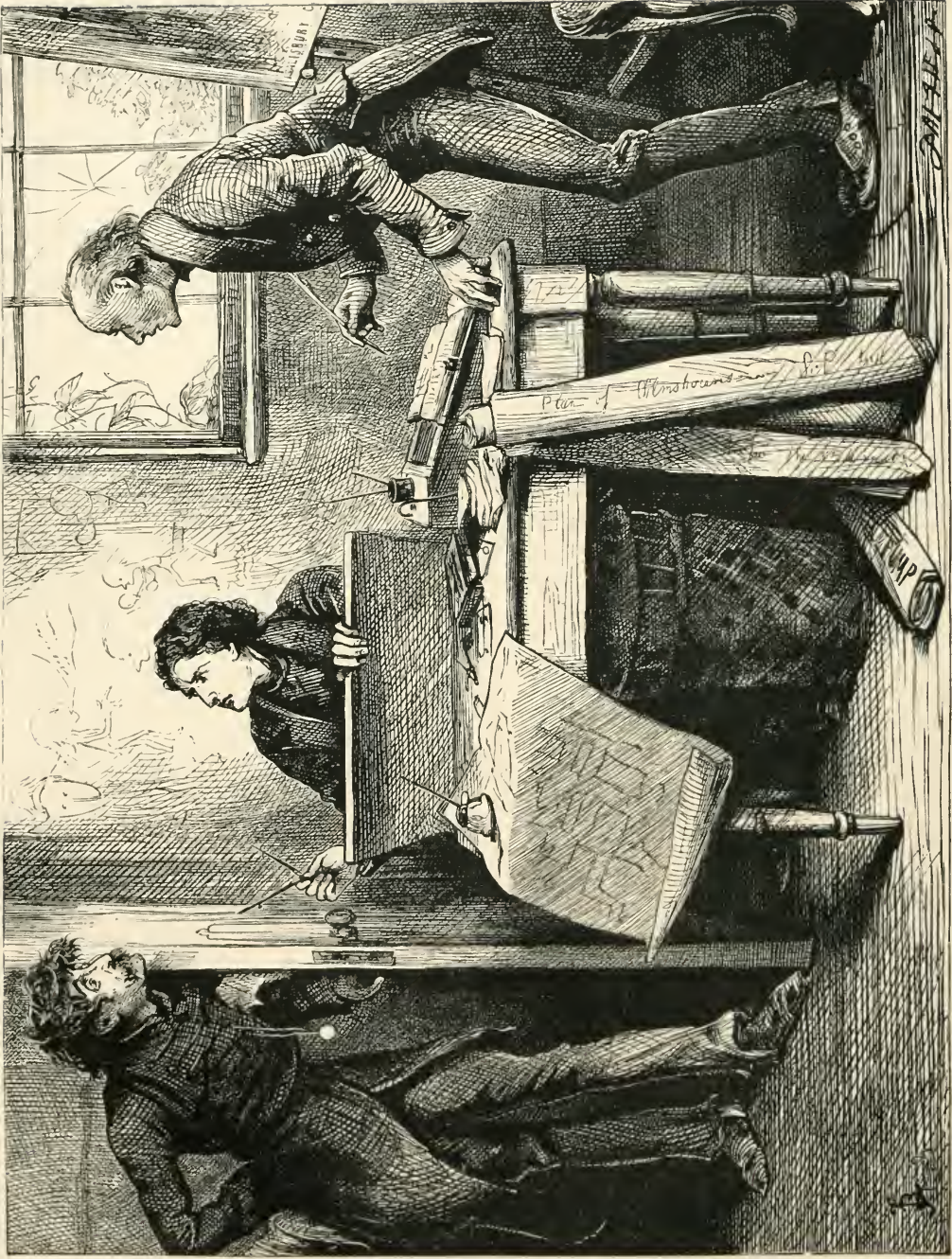
But suddenly remembering their compact, he took up the poem at the place where he had left off, and went on reading; always forgetting to snuff the candle, until its wick looked like a mushroom. He gradually became so much interested, that he quite forgot to replenish the fire; and was only reminded of his neglect by Martin Chuzzlewit starting up after the lapse of an hour or so, and crying with a shiver:

"Why, it's nearly out, I declare! No wonder I dreamed of being frozen. Do call for some coals. What a fellow you are, Pinch!"

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH MR. CHEVY SLYME ASSERTS THE INDEPENDENCE OF HIS SPIRIT; AND THE BLUE DRAGON LOSES A LIMB.

MARTIN began to work at the grammar-school next morning, with so much vigour and expedition, that Mr. Pinch had new reason to do homage to the natural endowments of that young gentleman, and to acknowledge his infinite superiority to himself. The new pupil received Tom's compliments very graciously; and having by this time conceived a real regard for him, in



"YOU'RE A PAIR OF WHITTINGTONS, GENTS, WITHOUT THE CAT; . . . MY NAME IS TIGG; HOW DO YOU DO?"

his own peculiar way, predicted that they would always be the very best of friends, and that neither of them, he was certain (but particularly Tom), would ever have reason to regret the day on which they became acquainted. Mr. Pinch was delighted to hear him say this, and felt so much flattered by his kind assurances of friendship and protection, that he was at a loss how to express the pleasure they afforded him. And indeed it may be observed of this friendship, such as it was, that it had within it more likely materials of endurance than many a sworn brotherhood that has been rich in promise; for so long as the one party found a pleasure in patronising, and the other in being patronised (which was in the very essence of their respective characters), it was of all possible events among the least probable, that the twin demons, Envy and Pride, would ever arise between them. So in very many cases of friendship, or what passes for it, the old axiom is reversed, and like clings to unlike more than to like.

They were both very busy on the afternoon succeeding the family's departure—Martin with the grammar-school, and Tom in balancing certain receipts of rents, and deducting Mr. Pecksniff's commission from the same; in which abstruse employment he was much distracted by a habit his new friend had of whistling aloud, while he was drawing—when they were not a little startled by the unexpected obtrusion into that sanctuary of genius, of a human head, which although a shaggy and somewhat alarming head, in appearance, smiled affably upon them from the doorway, in a manner that was at once waggish, conciliatory, and expressive of approbation.

"I am not industrious myself, gents both," said the head, "but I know how to appreciate that quality in others. I wish I may turn grey and ugly, if it isn't, in my opinion, next to genius, one of the very charmingest qualities of the human mind. Upon my soul, I am grateful to my friend Pecksniff for helping me to the contemplation of such a delicious picture as you present. You remind me of Whittington, afterwards thrice Lord Mayor of London. I give you my unsullied word of honour, that you very strongly remind me of that historical character. You are a pair of Whittingtons, gents, without the cat; which is a most agreeable and blessed exception to me, for I am not attached to the feline species. My name is Tigg; how do you do?"

Martin looked to Mr. Pinch for an explanation; and Tom, who had never in his life set eyes on Mr. Tigg before, looked to that gentleman himself.

"Chevy Slyme?" said Mr. Tigg, interrogatively, and kissing his left hand in token of friendship. "You will understand me when I say that I am the accredited agent of Chevy Slyme—that I am the ambassador from the court of Chiv? Ha ha!"

"Heyday!" asked Martin, starting at the mention of a name he knew. "Pray what does he want with me?"

"If your name is Pinch"—Mr. Tigg began.

"It is not," said Martin, checking himself. "That is Mr. Pinch."

"If that is Mr. Pinch," cried Tigg, kissing his hand again, and beginning to follow his head into the room, "he will permit me to say that I greatly esteem and respect his character, which has been most highly commended to me by my friend Pecksniff; and that I deeply appreciate his talent for the organ, notwithstanding that I do not, if I may use the expression, grind, myself. If this is Mr. Pinch, I will venture to express a hope that I see him well, and that he is suffering no inconvenience from the easterly wind?"

"Thank you," said Tom. "I am very well."

"That is a comfort," Mr. Tigg rejoined. "Then," he added, shielding his lips with the palm of his hand, and applying them close to Mr. Pinch's ear, "I have come for the letter."

"For the letter," said Tom aloud. "What letter?"

"The letter," whispered Tigg, in the same cautious manner as before, "which my friend Pecksniff addressed to Chevy Slyme, Esquire, and left with you."

"He didn't leave any letter with me," said Tom.

"Hush!" cried the other. "It's all the same thing, though not so delicately done by my friend Pecksniff as I could have wished—the money."

"The money!" cried Tom, quite scared.

"Exactly so," said Mr. Tigg. With which he rapped Tom twice or thrice upon the breast and nodded several times, as though he would say, that he saw they understood each other; that it was unnecessary to mention the circumstance before a third person; and that he would take it as a particular favour if Tom would slip the amount into his hand as quietly as possible.

Mr. Pinch, however, was so very much astounded by this (to him) inexplicable deportment, that he at once openly declared there must be some mistake, and that he had been entrusted with no commission whatever having any reference to Mr. Tigg or to his friend either. Mr. Tigg received this declaration with a grave

request that Mr. Pinch would have the goodness to make it again; and on Tom's repeating it in a still more emphatic and unmistakable manner, checked it off, sentence for sentence, by nodding his head solemnly at the end of each. When it had come to a close for the second time, Mr. Tigg sat himself down in a chair and addressed the young men as follows:

"Then I tell you what it is, gents both. There is at this present moment in this very place, a perfect constellation of talent and genius, who is involved, through what I cannot but designate as the culpable negligence of my friend Pecksniff, in a situation as tremendous, perhaps, as the social intercourse of the nineteenth century will readily admit of. There is actually at this instant, at the Blue Dragon in this village—an alehouse observe; a common, paltry, low-minded, clod-hopping, pipe-smoking alehouse—an individual, of whom it may be said, in the language of the Poet, that nobody but himself can in any way come up to him; who is detained there for his bill. Ha! ha! For his bill. I repeat it—for his bill. Now," said Mr. Tigg, "we have heard of Fox's Book of Martyrs, I believe, and we have heard of the Court of Requests, and the Star Chamber; but I fear the contradiction of no man alive or dead, when I assert that my friend Chevy Slyme being held in pawn for a bill, beats any amount of cock-fighting with which I am acquainted."

Martin and Mr. Pinch looked, first at each other, and afterwards at Mr. Tigg, who with his arms folded on his breast surveyed them, half in despondency and half in bitterness.

"Don't mistake me, gents both," he said, stretching forth his right hand. "If it had been for anything but a bill, I could have borne it, and could still have looked upon mankind with some feeling of respect; but when such a man as my friend Slyme is detained for a score—a thing in itself essentially mean; a low performance on a slate, or possibly chalked upon the back of a door—I do feel that there is a screw of such magnitude loose somewhere, that the whole framework of society is shaken, and the very first principles of things can no longer be trusted. In short, gents both," said Mr. Tigg with a passionate flourish of his hands and head, "when a man like Slyme is detained for such a thing as a bill, I reject the superstitions of ages, and believe nothing. I don't even believe that I *don't* believe, curse me if I do!"

"I am very sorry, I am sure," said Tom after a pause, "but Mr. Pecksniff said nothing to me about it, and I couldn't act without his instruc-

tions. Wouldn't it be better, sir, if you were to go—to wherever you came from—yourself, and remit the money to your friend?"

"How can that be done, when I am detained also?" said Mr. Tigg; "and when, moreover, owing to the astounding, and I must add, guilty negligence of my friend Pecksniff, I have no money for coach-hire?"

Tom thought of reminding the gentleman (who, no doubt, in his agitation had forgotten it) that there was a post-office in the land; and that possibly if he wrote to some friend or agent for a remittance it might not be lost upon the road; or at all events that the chance, however desperate, was worth trusting to. But, as his good-nature presently suggested to him certain reasons for abstaining from this hint, he paused again, and then asked:

"Did you say, sir, that you were detained also?"

"Come here," said Mr. Tigg, rising. "You have no objection to my opening this window for a moment?"

"Certainly not," said Tom.

"Very good," said Mr. Tigg, lifting the sash. "You see a fellow down there in a red neckcloth and no waistcoat?"

"Of course I do," cried Tom. "That's Mark Tapley."

"Mark Tapley is it?" said the gentleman. "Then Mark Tapley had not only the great politeness to follow me to this house, but is waiting now, to see me home again. And for that act of attention, sir," added Mr. Tigg, stroking his moustache, "I can tell you, that Mark Tapley had better in his infancy have been fed to suffocation by Mrs. Tapley, than preserved to this time."

Mr. Pinch was not so dismayed by this terrible threat, but that he had voice enough to call to Mark to come in, and up-stairs; a summons which he so speedily obeyed, that almost as soon as Tom and Mr. Tigg had drawn in their heads and closed the window again, he, the denounced, appeared before them.

"Come here, Mark!" said Mr. Pinch. "Good gracious me, what's the matter between Mrs. Lupin and this gentleman?"

"What gentleman, sir?" said Mark. "I don't see no gentleman here, sir, excepting you and the new gentleman," to whom he made a rough kind of bow—"and there's nothing wrong between Mrs. Lupin and either of you, Mr. Pinch, I am sure."

"Nonsense, Mark!" cried Tom. "You see Mr.—"

"Tigg," interposed that gentleman. "Wait

a bit. I shall crush him soon. All in good time!"

"Oh *him!*" rejoined Mark, with an air of careless defiance. "Yes, I see *him*. I could see him a little better, if he'd shave himself, and get his hair cut."

Mr. Tigg shook his head with a ferocious look, and smote himself once upon the breast.

"It's no use," said Mark. "If you knock ever so much in that quarter, you'll get no answer. I know better. There's nothing there but padding: and a greasy sort it is."

"Nay, Mark," urged Mr. Pinch, interposing to prevent hostilities, "tell me what I ask you. You're not out of temper, I hope?"

"Out of temper, sir!" cried Mark, with a grin; "why no, sir. There's a little credit—not much—in being jolly, when such fellows as him is a going about like roaring lions: if there *is* any breed of lions, at least, as it all roar and mane. What is there between him and Mrs. Lupin, sir? Why, there's a score between him and Mrs. Lupin. And I think Mrs. Lupin lets him and his friend off very easy in not charging 'em double prices for being a disgrace to the Dragon. That's my opinion. I wouldn't have any such Peter the Wild Boy as him in my house, sir, not if I was paid race-week prices for it. He's enough to turn the very beer in the casks sour, with his looks: he is! So he would, if it had judgment enough."

"You're not answering my question, you know, Mark," observed Mr. Pinch.

"Well, sir," said Mark, "I don't know as there's much to answer further than that. Him and his friend goes and stops at the Moon and Stars till they've run a bill there; and then comes and stops with us and does the same. The running of bills is common enough, Mr. Pinch; it an't that as we object to, it's the ways of this chap. Nothing's good enough for him; all the women is dying for him he thinks, and is overpaid if he winks at 'em; and all the men was made to be ordered about by him. This not being aggravation enough, he says this morning to me, in his usual captivating way, 'We're going to-night, my man.' 'Are you sir?' says I. 'Perhaps you'd like the bill got ready, sir?' 'Oh no, my man,' he says, 'you needn't mind that. I'll give Pecksniff orders to see to that.' In reply to which the Dragon makes answer, 'Thankee, sir, you're very kind to honour us so far, but as we don't know any particular good of you, and you don't travel with luggage, and Mr. Pecksniff an't at home (which perhaps you mayn't happen to be aware of, sir), we should prefer something more satisfactory;' and that's

where the matter stands. And I ask," said Mr. Tapley, pointing, in conclusion, to Mr. Tigg, with his hat, "any lady or gentleman, possessing ordinary strength of mind, to say, whether he's a disagreeable-looking chap or not?"

"Let me inquire," said Martin, interposing between this candid speech and the delivery of some blighting anathema by Mr. Tigg, "what the amount of this debt may be."

"In point of money, sir, very little," answered Mark. "Only just turned of three pounds. But it an't that; it's the——"

"Yes, yes, you told us so before," said Martin. "Pinch, a word with you."

"What is it?" asked Tom, retiring with him to a corner of the room.

"Why, simply—I am ashamed to say—that this Mr. Slyme is a relation of mine, of whom I never heard anything pleasant; and that I don't want him here just now, and think he would be cheaply got rid of, perhaps, for three or four pounds. You haven't enough money to pay this bill, I suppose?"

Tom shook his head to an extent that left no doubt of his entire sincerity.

"That's unfortunate, for I am poor too; and in case you had had it, I'd have borrowed it of you. But if we told this landlady we would see her paid, I suppose that would answer the same purpose?"

"Oh dear, yes!" said Tom. "She knows me, bless you!"

"Then, let us go down at once and tell her so; for the sooner we are rid of their company the better. As you have conducted the conversation with this gentleman hitherto, perhaps you'll tell him what we purpose doing; will you?"

Mr. Pinch, complying, at once imparted the intelligence to Mr. Tigg, who shook him warmly by the hand in return, assuring him that his faith in anything and everything was again restored. It was not so much, he said, for the temporary relief of this assistance that he prized it, as for its vindication of the high principle that Nature's Nobles felt with Nature's Nobles, and that true greatness of soul sympathised with true greatness of soul, all the world over. It proved to him, he said, that like him they admired genius, even when it was coupled with the alloy occasionally visible in the metal of his friend Slyme; and on behalf of that friend, he thanked them; as warmly and heartily as if the cause were his own. Being cut short in these speeches by a general move towards the stairs, he took possession at the street-door of the lappel of Mr. Pinch's coat, as a security against further interruption; and entertained that gentleman with some highly im-

proving discourse until they reached the Dragon, whither they were closely followed by Mark and the new pupil.

The rosy hostess scarcely needed Mr. Pinch's word as a preliminary to the release of her two visitors, of whom she was glad to be rid on any terms; indeed, their brief detention had originated mainly with Mr. Tapley, who entertained a constitutional dislike to gentlemen out-at-elbows who flourished on false pretences; and had conceived a particular aversion to Mr. Tigg and his friend, as choice specimens of the species. The business in hand thus easily settled, Mr. Pinch and Martin would have withdrawn immediately, but for the urgent entreaties of Mr. Tigg that they would allow him the honour of presenting them to his friend Slyme, which were so very difficult of resistance that, yielding partly to these persuasions and partly to their own curiosity, they suffered themselves to be ushered into the presence of that distinguished gentleman.

He was brooding over the remains of yesterday's decanter of brandy, and was engaged in the thoughtful occupation of making a chain of rings on the top of the table with the wet foot of his drinking-glass. Wretched and forlorn as he looked, Mr. Slyme had once been, in his way, the choicest of swaggerers: putting forth his pretensions, boldly, as a man of infinite taste and most undoubted promise. The stock-in-trade requisite to set up an amateur in this department of business, is very slight and easily got together; a trick of the nose and a curl of the lip sufficient to compound a tolerable sneer, being ample provision for any exigency. But, in an evil hour, this offshoot of the Chuzzlewit trunk, being lazy, and ill qualified for any regular pursuit, and having dissipated such means as he ever possessed, had formally established himself as a professor of Taste for a livelihood; and finding, too late, that something more than his old amount of qualifications was necessary to sustain him in this calling, had quickly fallen to his present level, where he retained nothing of his old self but his boastfulness and his bile, and seemed to have no existence separate or apart from his friend Tigg. And now so abject and so pitiful was he—at once so maudlin, insolent, beggarly, and proud—that even his friend and parasite, standing erect beside him, swelled into a Man by contrast.

"Chiv," said Mr. Tigg, clapping him on the back, "my friend Pecksniff not being at home, I have arranged our trifling piece of business with Mr. Pinch and friend. Mr. Pinch and friend, Mr. Chevy Slyme—Chiv, Mr. Pinch and friend!"

"These are agreeable circumstances in which to be introduced to strangers," said Chevy Slyme, turning his bloodshot eyes towards Tom Pinch. "I am the most miserable man in the world, I believe!"

Tom begged he wouldn't mention it; and finding him in this condition, retired, after an awkward pause, followed by Martin. But Mr. Tigg so urgently conjured them, by coughs and signs, to remain in the shadow of the door, that they stopped there.

"I swear," cried Mr. Slyme, giving the table an imbecile blow with his fist, and then feebly leaning his head upon his hand, while some drunken drops oozed from his eyes, "that I am the wretchedest creature on record. Society is in a conspiracy against me. I'm the most literary man alive. I'm full of scholarship; I'm full of genius; I'm full of information; I'm full of novel views on every subject; yet look at my condition! I'm at this moment obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill!"

Mr. Tigg replenished his friend's glass, pressed it into his hand, and nodded an intimation to the visitors that they would see him in a better aspect immediately.

"Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill, eh!" repeated Mr. Slyme, after a sulky application to his glass. "Very pretty! And crowds of impostors, the while, becoming famous: men who are no more on a level with me than—Tigg, I take you to witness that I am the most persecuted hound on the face of the earth."

With a whine, not unlike the cry of the animal he named, in its lowest state of humiliation, he raised his glass to his mouth again. He found some encouragement in it; for when he set it down, he laughed scornfully. Upon that Mr. Tigg gesticulated to the visitors once more, and with great expression: implying that now the time was come when they would see Chiv in his greatness.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Slyme. "Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill! Yet I think I've a rich uncle, Tigg, who could buy up the uncles of fifty strangers? Have I, or have I not? I come of a good family, I believe? Do I, or do I not? I'm not a man of common capacity or accomplishments, I think. Am I, or am I not?"

"You are the American aloe of the human race, my dear Chiv," said Mr. Tigg, "which only blooms once in a hundred years!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Slyme, again. "Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill! I! Obliged to two architect's apprentices—fellows who measure earth with iron chains, and build

houses like bricklayers. Give me the names of those two apprentices. How dare they oblige me!"

Mr. Tigg was quite lost in admiration of this noble trait in his friend's character; as he made known to Mr. Pinch in a neat little ballet of action, spontaneously invented for the purpose.

"I'll let 'em know, and I'll let all men know," cried Chevy Slyme, "that I'm none of the mean, grovelling, tame characters they meet with commonly. I have an independent spirit. I have a heart that swells in my bosom. I have a soul that rises superior to base considerations."

"Oh Chiv, Chiv," murmured Mr. Tigg, "you have a nobly independent nature, Chiv!"

"You go and do your duty, sir," said Mr. Slyme, angrily, "and borrow money for travelling expenses; and whoever you borrow it of, let 'em know that I possess a haughty spirit, and a proud spirit, and have infernally finely-touched chords in my nature, which won't brook patronage. Do you hear? Tell 'em I hate 'em, and that that's the way I preserve my self-respect; and tell 'em that no man ever respected himself more than I do!"

He might have added that he hated two sorts



“‘STILL A-BED!’ REPLIED THE BOY. ‘I WISH THEY WOS STILL A-BED. THEY’RE VERY NOISY A-BED; ALL CALLING FOR THEIR BOOTS AT ONCE.’”

of men; all those who did him favours, and all those who were better off than himself; as in either case their position was an insult to a man of his stupendous merits. But he did not; for with the apt closing words above recited, Mr. Slyme—of too haughty a stomach to work, to beg, to borrow, or to steal; yet mean enough to be worked or borrowed, begged or stolen for, by any catspaw that would serve his turn; too insolent to lick the hand that fed him in his need, yet cur enough to bite and tear it in the dark—with these apt closing words, Mr. Slyme

fell forward with his head upon the table, and so declined into a sodden sleep.

“Was there ever,” cried Mr. Tigg, joining the young men at the door, and shutting it carefully behind him, “such an independent spirit as is possessed by that extraordinary creature? Was there ever such a Roman as our friend Chiv? Was there ever a man of such a purely classical turn of thought, and of such a toga-like simplicity of nature? Was there ever a man with such a flow of eloquence? Might he not, gents both, I ask, have sat upon a tripod in the ancient

times, and prophesied to a perfectly unlimited extent, if previously supplied with gin-and-water at the public cost?"

Mr. Pinch was about to contest this latter position with his usual mildness, when, observing that his companion had already gone downstairs, he prepared to follow him.

"You are not going, Mr. Pinch?" said Tigg.

"Thank you," answered Tom. "Yes. Don't come down."

"Do you know that I should like one little word in private with you, Mr. Pinch?" said Tigg, following him. "One minute of your company in the skittle-ground would very much relieve my mind. Might I beseech that favour?"

"Oh, certainly," replied Tom. "if you really wish it." So he accompanied Mr. Tigg to the retreat in question: on arriving at which place that gentleman took from his hat what seemed to be the fossil remains of an antediluvian pocket-handkerchief, and wiped his eyes therewith.

"You have not beheld me this day," said Mr. Tigg, "in a favourable light."

"Don't mention that," said Tom, "I beg."

"But you have *not*," cried Tigg. "I must persist in that opinion. If you could have seen me, Mr. Pinch, at the head of my regiment on the coast of Africa, charging in the form of a hollow square with the women and children and the regimental plate-chest in the centre, you would not have known me for the same man. You would have respected me, sir."

Tom had certain ideas of his own upon the subject of glory; and consequently he was not quite so much excited by this picture as Mr. Tigg could have desired.

"But no matter!" said that gentleman. "The school-boy writing home to his parents and describing the milk-and-water, said 'This is indeed weakness.' I repeat that assertion in reference to myself at the present moment: and I ask your pardon. Sir, you have seen my friend Slyme?"

"No doubt," said Mr. Pinch.

"Sir, you have been impressed by my friend Slyme?"

"Not very pleasantly, I must say," answered Tom, after a little hesitation.

"I am grieved but not surprised," cried Mr. Tigg, detaining him by both lappels, "to hear that you have come to that conclusion; for it is my own. But, Mr. Pinch, though I am a rough and thoughtless man, I can honour Mind. I honour Mind in following my friend. To you of all men, Mr. Pinch, I have a right to make appeal on Mind's behalf, when it has not the art to push its fortune in the world. And so, sir—

not for myself, who have no claim upon you, but for my crushed, my sensitive and independent friend, who has—I ask the loan of three half-crowns. I ask you for the loan of three half-crowns, distinctly, and without a blush. I ask it almost as a right. And when I add that they will be returned by post, this week, I feel that you will blame me for that sordid stipulation."

Mr. Pinch took from his pocket an old-fashioned red-leather purse with a steel clasp, which had probably once belonged to his deceased grandmother. It held one half-sovereign and no more. All Tom's worldly wealth until next quarter-day.

"Stay!" cried Mr. Tigg, who had watched this proceeding keenly. "I was just about to say, that for the convenience of posting you had better make it gold. Thank you. A general direction, I suppose, to Mr. Pinch, at Mr. Pecksniff's—will that find you?"

"That'll find me," said Tom. "You had better put Esquire to Mr. Pecksniff's name, if you please. Direct to me, you know, at Seth Pecksniff's, Esquire."

"At Seth Pecksniff's, Esquire," repeated Mr. Tigg, taking an exact note of it, with a stump of pencil. "We said this week, I believe?"

"Yes: or Monday will do," observed Tom.

"No, no, I beg your pardon. Monday will *not* do," said Mr. Tigg. "If we stipulated for this week, Saturday is the latest day. Did we stipulate for this week?"

"Since you are so particular about it," said Tom, "I think we did."

Mr. Tigg added this condition to his memorandum; read the entry over to himself with a severe frown; and that the transaction might be the more correct and business-like, appended his initials to the whole. That done, he assured Mr. Pinch that everything was now perfectly regular; and, after squeezing his hand with great fervour, departed.

Tom entertained enough suspicion that Martin might possibly turn this interview into a jest, to render him desirous to avoid the company of that young gentleman for the present. With this view he took a few turns up and down the skittle-ground, and did not re-enter the house until Mr. Tigg and his friend had quitted it, and the new pupil and Mark were watching their departure from one of the windows.

"I was just a saying, sir, that if one could live by it," observed Mark, pointing after their late guests, "that would be the sort of service for me. Waiting on such individuals as them, would be better than grave-digging, sir."

"And staying here would be better than either,

Mark," replied Tom. "So take my advice, and continue to swim easily in smooth water."

"It's too late to take it now, sir," said Mark. "I have broke it to her, sir. I am off to-morrow morning."

"Off!" cried Mr. Pinch, "where to?"

"I shall go up to London, sir."

"What to be?" asked Mr. Pinch.

"Well! I don't know yet, sir. Nothing turned up that day I opened my mind to you, as was at all likely to suit me. All them trades I thought of was a deal too jolly; there was no credit at all to be got in any of 'em. I must look for a private service I suppose, sir. I might be brought out strong, perhaps, in a serious family, Mr. Pinch."

"Perhaps you might come out rather too strong for a serious family's taste, Mark."

"That's possible, sir. If I could get into a wicked family, I might do myself justice: but the difficulty is to make sure of one's ground, because a young man can't very well advertise that he wants a place, and wages an't so much an object as a wicked situation; can he, sir?"

"Why, no," said Mr. Pinch, "I don't think he can."

"An envious family," pursued Mark, with a thoughtful face; "or a quarrelsome family, or a malicious family, or even a good out-and-out mean family, would open a field of action as I might do something in. The man as would have suited me of all other men was that old gentleman as was took ill here, for he really was a trying customer. Howsever, I must wait and see what turns up, sir; and hope for the worst."

"You are determined to go then?" said Mr. Pinch.

"My box is gone already, sir, by the waggon, and I'm going to walk on to-morrow morning, and get a lift by the day coach when it overtakes me. So I wish you good b'ye, Mr. Pinch—and you too, sir,—and all good luck and happiness."

They both returned his greeting laughingly, and walked home arm-in-arm: Mr. Pinch imparting to his new friend, as they went, such further particulars of Mark Tapley's whimsical restlessness as the reader is already acquainted with.

In the mean time Mark, having a shrewd notion that his mistress was in very low spirits, and that he could not exactly answer for the consequences of any lengthened *tête-à-tête* in the bar, kept himself obstinately out of her way all the afternoon and evening. In this piece of generalship he was very much assisted by the great influx of company into the tap-room; for the news of his intention having gone abroad,

there was a perfect throng there all the evening, and much drinking of healths and clinking of mugs. At length the house was closed for the night; and there being now no help for it, Mark put the best face he could upon the matter, and walked doggedly to the bar-door.

"If I look at her," said Mark to himself, "I'm done. I feel that I'm going fast."

"You have come at last," said Mrs. Lupin.

Aye, Mark said: There he was.

"And you are determined to leave us, Mark," cried Mrs. Lupin.

"Why, yes; I am," said Mark; keeping his eyes hard upon the floor.

"I thought," pursued the landlady, with a most engaging hesitation, "that you had been—fond—of the Dragon?"

"So I am," said Mark.

"Then," pursued the hostess—and it really was not an unnatural inquiry—"why do you desert it?"

But as he gave no manner of answer to this question; not even on its being repeated; Mrs. Lupin put his money into his hand, and asked him—not unkindly, quite the contrary—what he would take.

It is proverbial that there are certain things which flesh and blood cannot bear. Such a question as this, propounded in such a manner, at such a time, and by such a person, proved (at least, as far as Mark's flesh and blood were concerned) to be one of them. He looked up in spite of himself directly; and having once looked up, there was no looking down again; for of all the tight, plump, buxom, bright-eyed, dimple-faced landladies that ever shone on earth, there stood before him then, bodily in that bar, the very pink and pine-apple.

"Why, I tell you what," said Mark, throwing off all his constraint in an instant, and seizing the hostess round the waist—at which she was not at all alarmed, for she knew what a good young man he was—"if I took what I liked most, I should take you. If I only thought of what was best for me, I should take you. If I took what nineteen young fellows in twenty would be glad to take, and would take at any price, I should take you. Yes, I should," cried Mr. Tapley, shaking his head, expressively enough, and looking (in a momentary state of forgetfulness) rather hard at the hostess's ripe lips. "And no man wouldn't wonder if I did!"

Mrs. Lupin said he amazed her. She was astonished how he could say such things. She had never thought of it him.

"Why, I never thought it of myself till now!" said Mark, raising his eyebrows with a look of

the merriest possible surprise. "I always expected we should part, and never have no explanation; I meant to do it when I come in here just now; but there's something about you as makes a man sensible. Then let us have a word or two together: letting it be understood beforehand—" he added this in a grave tone, to prevent the possibility of any mistake—"that I'm not a going to make no love, you know."

There was for just one second a shade—though not by any means a dark one—on the landlady's open brow. But it passed off instantly, in a laugh that came from her very heart.

"Oh, very good!" she said; "if there is to be no love-making, you had better take your arm away."

"Lord, why should I?" cried Mark. "It's quite innocent."

"Of course it's innocent," returned the hostess, "or I shouldn't allow it."

"Very well!" said Mark. "Then let it be."

There was so much reason in this, that the landlady laughed again, suffered it to remain, and bade him say what he had to say, and be quick about it. But he was an impudent fellow, she added.

"Ha, ha! I almost think I am!" cried Mark, "though I never thought so before. Why, I can say anything to-night!"

"Say what you're going to say if you please, and be quick," returned the landlady, "for I want to get to bed."

"Why, then, my dear good soul," said Mark, "and a kinder woman than you are, never drew breath—let me see the man as says she did—what would be the likely consequence of us two being—"

"Oh nonsense!" cried Mrs. Lupin. "Don't talk about that any more."

"No no, but it ain't nonsense," said Mark; "and I wish you'd attend. What would be the likely consequence of us two being married? If I can't be content and comfortable in this here lively Dragon now, is it to be looked for as I should be then? By no means. Very good. Then you, even with your good humour, would be always on the fret and worrit, always uncomfortable in your own mind, always a thinking as you was getting too old for my taste, always a picturing me to yourself as being chained up to the Dragon door, and wanting to break away. I don't know that it would be so," said Mark, "but I don't know that it mightn't be. I *am* a roving sort of chap, I know. I'm fond of change. I'm always a thinking that with my good health and spirits, it would be more creditable in me to be jolly where there's things a going on to

make one dismal. It may be a mistake of mine, you see, but nothing short of trying how it acts, will set it right. Then an't it best that I should go: particular when your free way has helped me out to say all this, and we can part as good friends as we have ever been since first I entered this here noble Dragon, which," said Mr. Tapley in conclusion, "has my good word and my good wish, to the day of my death!"

The hostess sat quite silent for a little time, but she very soon put both her hands in Mark's and shook them heartily.

"For you are a good man," she said; looking into his face with a smile, which was rather serious for her. "And I do believe have been a better friend to me to-night than ever I have had in all my life."

"Oh! as to that, you know," said Mark, "that's nonsense. But love my heart alive!" he added, looking at her in a sort of rapture, "if you *are* that way disposed, what a lot of suitable husbands there is as you may drive distracted!"

She laughed again at this compliment; and once more shaking him by both hands, and bidding him, if he should ever want a friend, to remember her, turned gaily from the little bar and up the Dragon staircase.

"Humming a tune as she goes," said Mark, listening, "in case I should think she's at all put out, and should be made down-hearted. Come, here's some credit in being jolly, at last!"

With that piece of comfort, very ruefully uttered, he went, in anything but a jolly manner, to bed.

He rose early next morning, and was a-foot soon after sunrise. But it was of no use; the whole place was up to see Mark Tapley off: the boys, the dogs, the children, the old men, the busy people and the idlers, there they were, all calling out "Good b'ye, Mark," after their own manner, and all sorry he was going. Somehow he had a kind of sense that his old mistress was peeping from her chamber-window, but he couldn't make up his mind to look back.

"Good b'ye one, good b'ye all!" cried Mark, waving his hat on the top of his walking-stick, as he strode at a quick pace up the little street. "Hearty chaps them wheelwrights—hurrah! Here's the butcher's dog a-coming out of the garden—down, old fellow! And Mr. Pinch a-going to his organ—good b'ye, sir! And the terrier-bitch from over the way—hie, then, lass! And children enough to hand down human natur to the latest posterity—good b'ye, boys and girls! There's some credit in it now. I'm a-coming out strong at last. These are the cir-

cumstances that would try a ordinary mind; but I'm uncommon jolly, not quite as jolly as I could wish to be, but very near. Good b'ye! good b'ye!"

CHAPTER VIII.

ACCOMPANIES MR. PECKSNIFF AND HIS CHARMING DAUGHTERS TO THE CITY OF LONDON; AND RELATES WHAT FELL OUT, UPON THEIR WAY THITHER.

WHEN Mr. Pecksniff and the two young ladies got into the heavy coach at the end of the lane, they found it empty, which was a great comfort; particularly as the outside was quite full and the passengers looked very frosty. For as Mr. Pecksniff justly observed—when he and his daughters had burrowed their feet deep in the straw, wrapped themselves to the chin, and pulled up both windows—it is always satisfactory to feel, in keen weather, that many other people are not as warm as you are. And this, he said, was quite natural, and a very beautiful arrangement; not confined to coaches, but extending itself into many social ramifications. "For" (he observed), "if every one were warm and well-fed, we should lose the satisfaction of admiring the fortitude with which certain conditions of men bear cold and hunger. And if we were no better off than anybody else, what would become of our sense of gratitude; which," said Mr. Pecksniff with tears in his eyes, as he shook his fist at a beggar who wanted to get up behind, "is one of the holiest feelings of our common nature."

His children heard with becoming reverence these moral precepts from the lips of their father, and signified their acquiescence in the same, by smiles. That he might the better feed and cherish that sacred flame of gratitude in his breast, Mr. Pecksniff remarked that he would trouble his eldest daughter, even in this early stage of their journey, for the brandy-bottle. And from the narrow neck of that stone vessel, he imbibed a copious refreshment.

"What are we?" said Mr. Pecksniff, "but coaches? Some of us are slow coaches"—

"Goodness, Pa!" cried Charity.

"Some of us, I say," resumed her parent with increased emphasis, "are slow coaches; some of us are fast coaches. Our passions are the horses; and rampant animals too!"—

"Really Pa!" cried both the daughters at once. "How very unpleasant."

"And rampant animals too!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, with so much determination, that he may be said to have exhibited, at the moment, a sort of moral rampancy himself: "—and Virtue is the drag. We start from The Mother's Arms, and we run to The Dust Shovel."

When he had said this, Mr. Pecksniff, being exhausted, took some further refreshment. When he had done that, he corked the bottle tight, with the air of a man who had effectually corked the subject also; and went to sleep for three stages.

The tendency of mankind when it falls asleep in coaches, is to wake up cross; to find its legs in its way; and its corns an aggravation. Mr. Pecksniff not being exempt from the common lot of humanity, found himself, at the end of his nap, so decidedly the victim of these infirmities, that he had an irresistible inclination to visit them upon his daughters; which he had already begun to do in the shape of divers random kicks, and other unexpected motions of his shoes, when the coach stopped, and after a short delay, the door was opened.

"Now mind," said a thin sharp voice in the dark. "I and my son go inside, because the roof is full, but you agree only to charge us outside prices. It's quite understood that we won't pay more. Is it?"

"All right, sir," replied the guard.

"Is there anybody inside now?" inquired the voice.

"Three passengers," returned the guard.

"Then I ask the three passengers to witness this bargain, if they will be so good," said the voice. "My boy, I think we may safely get in."

In pursuance of which opinion, two people took their seats in the vehicle, which was solemnly licensed by Act of Parliament to carry any six persons who could be got in at the door.

"That was lucky!" whispered the old man, when they moved on again. "And a great stroke of policy in you to observe it. He, he, he! We couldn't have gone outside. I should have died of the rheumatism!"

Whether it occurred to the dutiful son that he had in some degree over-reached himself by contributing to the prolongation of his father's days; or whether the cold had affected his temper; is doubtful. But he gave his father such a nudge in reply, that that good old gentleman was taken with a cough which lasted for full five minutes, without intermission, and goaded Mr. Pecksniff to that pitch of irritation, that he said at last—and very suddenly—

"There is no room! There is really no room

in this coach for any gentleman with a cold in his head!"

"Mine," said the old man, after a moment's pause, "is upon my chest, Pecksniff."

The voice and manner, together, now that he spoke out; the composure of the speaker; the presence of his son; and his knowledge of Mr. Pecksniff; afforded a clue to his identity which it was impossible to mistake.

"Hem! I thought," said Mr. Pecksniff, returning to his usual mildness, "that I addressed a stranger. I find that I address a relative. Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son Mr. Jonas—for they, my dear children, are our travelling companions—will excuse me for an apparently harsh remark. It is not *my* desire to wound the feelings of any person with whom I am connected in family bonds. I may be a Hypocrite," said Mr. Pecksniff, cuttingly, "but I am not a Brute."

"Pooh, pooh!" said the old man. "What signifies that word, Pecksniff? Hypocrite! why, we are all hypocrites. We were all hypocrites t'other day. I am sure I felt that to be agreed upon among us, or I shouldn't have called you one. We should not have been there at all, if we had not been hypocrites. The only difference between you and the rest was—shall I tell you the difference between you and the rest now, Pecksniff?"

"If you please, my good sir; if you please."

"Why, the annoying quality in *you*, is," said the old man, "that you never have a confederate or partner in *your* juggling; you would deceive everybody, even those who practise the same art; and have a way with you, as if you—he, he, he!—as if you really believed yourself. I'd lay a handsome wager now," said the old man, "if I laid wagers, which I don't and never did, that you keep up appearances by a tacit understanding, even before your own daughters here. Now I, when I have a business scheme in hand, tell Jonas what it is, and we discuss it openly. You're not offended, Pecksniff?"

"Offended, my good sir!" cried that gentleman, as if he had received the highest compliments that language could convey.

"Are you travelling to London, Mr. Pecksniff?" asked the son.

"Yes, Mr. Jonas, we are travelling to London. We shall have the pleasure of your company all the way, I trust?"

"Oh! ecod, you had better ask father that," said Jonas. "I am not a going to commit myself."

Mr. Pecksniff was, as a matter of course, greatly entertained by this retort. His mirth

having subsided, Mr. Jonas gave him to understand that himself and parent were in fact travelling to their home in the metropolis: and that, since the memorable day of the great family gathering, they had been tarrying in that part of the country, watching the sale of certain eligible investments, which they had had in their copartnership eye when they came down; for it was their custom, Mr. Jonas said, whenever such a thing was practicable, to kill two birds with one stone, and never to throw away sprats, but as bait for whales. When he had communicated, to Mr. Pecksniff, these pithy scraps of intelligence, he said "That if it was all the same to him, he would turn him over to father, and have a chat with the gals;" and in furtherance of this polite scheme, he vacated his seat adjoining that gentleman, and established himself in the opposite corner, next to the fair Miss Mercy.

The education of Mr. Jonas had been conducted from his cradle on the strictest principles of the main chance. The very first word he learnt to spell was "gain," and the second (when he got into two syllables), "money." But for two results, which were not clearly foreseen perhaps by his watchful parent in the beginning, his training may be said to have been unexceptionable. One of these flaws was, that having been long taught by his father to over-reach everybody, he had imperceptibly acquired a love of over-reaching that venerable monitor himself. The other, that from his early habits of considering everything as a question of property, he had gradually come to look, with impatience, on his parent as a certain amount of personal estate, which had no right whatever to be going at large, but ought to be secured in that particular description of iron safe which is commonly called a coffin, and banked in the grave.

"Well, cousin!" said Mr. Jonas—"because we *are* cousins, you know, a few times removed—So you're going to London?"

Miss Mercy replied in the affirmative, pinching her sister's arm at the same time, and giggling excessively.

"Lots of beaux in London, cousin!" said Mr. Jonas, slightly advancing his elbow.

"Indeed, sir!" cried the young lady. "They won't hurt us, sir, I dare say." And having given him this answer with great demureness, she was so overcome by her own humour, that she was fain to stifle her merriment in her sister's shawl.

"Merry," cried that more prudent damsel, "really I am ashamed of you. How can you go on so? you wild thing!" At which Miss Merry only laughed the more, of course.

"I saw a wildness in her eye, t'other day," said Mr. Jonas, addressing Charity. "But you're the one to sit solemn! I say—you were regularly prim, cousin!"

"Oh! The old-fashioned fright!" cried Merry, in a whisper. "Cherry, my dear, upon my word you must sit next him. I shall die outright if he talks to me any more; I shall, positively!" To prevent which fatal consequence, the buoyant creature skipped out of her seat as she spoke, and squeezed her sister into the place from which she had risen.

"Don't mind crowding me," cried Mr. Jonas. "I like to be crowded by gals. Come a little closer, cousin."

"No, thank you, sir," said Charity.

"There's that other one a laughing again," said Mr. Jonas; "she's a laughing at my father, I shouldn't wonder. If he puts on that old flannel night-cap of his, I don't know what she'll do! Is that my father a snoring, Pecksniff?"

"Yes, Mr. Jonas."

"Tread upon his foot, will you be so good?" said the young gentleman. "The foot next you's the gouty one."

Mr. Pecksniff hesitating to perform this friendly office, Mr. Jonas did it himself; at the same time crying—

"Come, wake up, father, or you'll be having the nightmare, and screeching out, I know.—Do you ever have the nightmare, cousin?" he asked his neighbour, with characteristic gallantry, as he dropped his voice again.

"Sometimes," answered Charity. "Not often."

"The other one," said Mr. Jonas, after a pause. "Does *she* ever have the nightmare?"

"I don't know," replied Charity. "You had better ask her."

"She laughs so;" said Jonas; "there's no talking to her. Only hark how she's a going on now! You're the sensible one, cousin!"

"Tut, tut!" cried Charity.

"Oh! But you are! You know you are!"

"Mercy is a little giddy," said Miss Charity. "But she'll sober down in time."

"It'll be a very long time, then, if she does at all," rejoined her cousin. "Take a little more room."

"I am afraid of crowding you," said Charity. But she took it notwithstanding; and after one or two remarks on the extreme heaviness of the coach, and the number of places it stopped at, they fell into a silence which remained unbroken by any member of the party until supper-time.

Although Mr. Jonas conducted Charity to the hotel and sat himself beside her at the board, it was pretty clear that he had an eye to "the

other one" also, for he often glanced across at Mercy, and seemed to draw comparisons between the personal appearance of the two, which were not unfavourable to the superior plumpness of the younger sister. He allowed himself no great leisure for this kind of observation, however, being busily engaged with the supper, which, as he whispered in his fair companion's ear, was a contract business, and therefore the more she ate, the better the bargain was. His father, and Mr. Pecksniff, probably acting on the same wise principle, demolished everything that came within their reach, and by that means acquired a greasy expression of countenance, indicating contentment, if not repletion, which it was very pleasant to contemplate.

When they could eat no more, Mr. Pecksniff and Mr. Jonas subscribed for two sixpenny-worths of hot brandy-and-water, which the latter gentleman considered a more politic order than one shillingsworth; there being a chance of their getting more spirit out of the innkeeper under this arrangement than if it were all in one glass. Having swallowed his share of the enlivening fluid, Mr. Pecksniff, under pretence of going to see if the coach were ready, went secretly to the bar, and had his own little bottle filled, in order that he might refresh himself at leisure in the dark coach without being observed.

These arrangements concluded, and the coach being ready, they got into their old places and jogged on again. But before he composed himself for a nap, Mr. Pecksniff delivered a kind of grace after meat, in these words:

"The process of digestion, as I have been informed by anatomical friends, is one of the most wonderful works of nature. I do not know how it may be with others, but it is a great satisfaction to me to know, when regaling on my humble fare, that I am putting in motion the most beautiful machinery with which we have any acquaintance. I really feel at such times as if I was doing a public service. When I have wound myself up, if I may employ such a term," said Mr. Pecksniff with exquisite tenderness, "and know that I am Going, I feel that in the lesson afforded by the works within me, I am a Benefactor to my Kind!"

As nothing could be added to this, nothing was said; and Mr. Pecksniff, exulting, it may be presumed, in his moral utility, went to sleep again.

The rest of the night wore away in the usual manner. Mr. Pecksniff and old Anthony kept tumbling against each other and waking up much terrified, or crushed their heads in opposite

corners of the coach and strangely tattooed the surface of their faces—Heaven knows how—in their sleep. The coach stopped and went on, and went on and stopped, times out of number. Passengers got up and passengers got down, and fresh horses came and went and came again, with scarcely any interval between each team as it seemed to those who were dozing, and with a gap of a whole night between every one as it seemed to those who were broad awake. At length they began to jolt and rumble over horribly uneven stones, and Mr. Pecksniff looking out of window said it was to-morrow morning, and they were there.

Very soon afterwards the coach stopped at the office in the city; and the street in which it was situated was already in a bustle, that fully bore out Mr. Pecksniff's words about its being morning, though for any signs of day yet appearing in the sky it might have been midnight. There was a dense fog too—as if it were a city in the clouds, which they had been travelling to all night up a magic beanstalk—and a thick crust upon the pavement like oil-cake; which, one of the outsides (mad, no doubt) said to another (his keeper, of course), was Snow.

Taking a confused leave of Anthony and his son, and leaving the luggage of himself and daughters at the office to be called for afterwards, Mr. Pecksniff, with one of the young ladies under each arm, dived across the street, and then across other streets, and so up the queerest courts, and down the strangest alleys and under the blindest archways, in a kind of frenzy: now skipping over a kennel, now running for his life from a coach and horses; now thinking he had lost his way, now thinking he had found it; now in a state of the highest confidence, now despondent to the last degree, but always in a great perspiration and flurry; until at length they stopped in a kind of paved yard near the Monument. That is to say, Mr. Pecksniff told them so; for as to anything they could see of the Monument, or anything else but the buildings close at hand, they might as well have been playing blind man's buff at Salisbury.

Mr. Pecksniff looked about him for a moment, and then knocked at the door of a very dingy edifice, even among the choice collection of dingy edifices at hand; on the front of which was a little oval board, like a tea-tray, with this inscription—"Commercial Boarding-House: M. Todgers."

It seemed that M. Todgers was not up yet, for Mr. Pecksniff knocked twice and rang thrice, without making any impression on anything but a dog over the way. At last a chain and some

bolts were withdrawn with a rusty noise, as if the weather had made the very fastenings hoarse, and a small boy with a large red head, and no nose to speak of, and a very dirty Wellington boot on his left arm, appeared; who (being surprised) rubbed the nose just mentioned with the back of a shoe-brush, and said nothing.

"Still a-bed, my man?" asked Mr. Pecksniff.

"Still a-bed!" replied the boy. "I wish they was still a-bed. They're very noisy a-bed; all calling for their boots at once. I thought you was the Paper, and wondered why you didn't shove yourself through the grating as usual. What do you want?"

Considering his years, which were tender, the youth may be said to have preferred this question sternly, and in something of a defiant manner. But Mr. Pecksniff, without taking umbrage at his bearing, put a card in his hand, and bade him take that up-stairs, and show them in the meanwhile into a room where there was a fire.

"Or if there's one in the eating parlour," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I can find it myself." So he led his daughters, without waiting for any further introduction, into a room on the ground floor, where a table-cloth (rather a tight and scanty fit in reference to the table it covered) was already spread for breakfast: displaying a mighty dish of pink boiled beef; an instance of that particular style of loaf which is known to housekeepers as a slack-baked, crummy quartern; a liberal provision of cups and saucers; and the usual appendages.

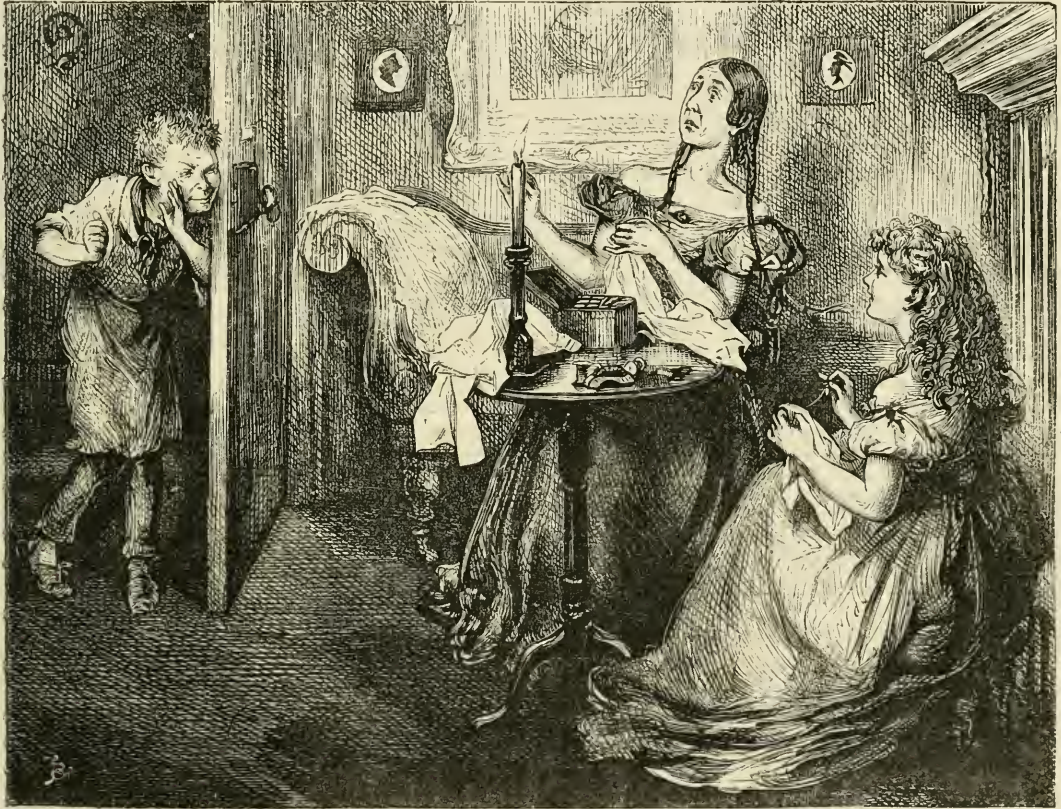
Inside the fender were some half dozen pairs of shoes and boots, of various sizes, just cleaned and turned with the soles upward to dry; and a pair of short black gaiters, on one of which was chalked—in sport, it would appear, by some gentleman who had slipped down for the purpose, pending his toilet, and gone up again—"Jinkins's Particular," while the other exhibited a sketch in profile, claiming to be the portrait of Jinkins himself.

M. Todgers's Commercial Boarding-House was a house of that sort which was likely to be dark at any time; but that morning it was especially dark. There was an odd smell in the passage, as if the concentrated essence of all the dinners that had been cooked in the kitchen since the house was built, lingered at the top of the kitchen stairs to that hour, and, like the Black Friar in *Don Juan*, "wouldn't be driven away." In particular, there was a sensation of cabbage; as if all the greens that had ever been boiled there, were evergreens, and flourished in immortal strength. The parlour was wainscoted,

and communicated to strangers a magnetic and instinctive consciousness of rats and mice. The staircase was very gloomy and very broad, with balustrades so thick and heavy that they would have served for a bridge. In a sombre corner on the first landing, stood a gruff old giant of a clock, with a preposterous coronet of three brass balls on his head; whom few had ever seen—none ever looked in the face—and who seemed to continue his heavy tick for no other reason than to warn heedless people from running into

him accidentally. It had not been papered or painted, hadn't Todgers's, within the memory of man. It was very black, begrimed, and mouldy. And, at the top of the staircase, was an old, disjointed, rickety, ill-favoured skylight, patched and mended in all kinds of ways, which looked distrustfully down at everything that passed below, and covered Todgers's up as if it were a sort of human cucumber-frame, and only people of a peculiar growth were reared there.

Mr. Pecksniff and his fair daughters had not



“I SAY—THERE’S FOWLS TO-MORROW. NOT SKINNY ONES. OH NO!”

stood warming themselves at the fire ten minutes, when the sound of feet was heard upon the stairs, and the presiding deity of the establishment came hurrying in.

M. Todgers was a lady—rather a bony and hard-featured lady—with a row of curls in front of her head, shaped like little barrels of beer; and on the top of it something made of net,—you couldn't call it a cap exactly—which looked like a black cobweb. She had a little basket on her arm, and in it a bunch of keys that jingled

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 5.

as she came. In her other hand she bore a flaming tallow candle, which, after surveying Mr. Pecksniff for one instant by its light, she put down upon the table, to the end that she might receive him with the greater cordiality.

“Mr. Pecksniff,” cried Mrs. Todgers. “Welcome to London! Who would have thought of such a visit as this, after so—dear, dear!—so many years! How do you *do*, Mr. Pecksniff?”

“As well as ever; and as glad to see you, as

ever;" Mr. Pecksniff made response. "Why, you are younger than you used to be!"

"You are, I am sure!" said Mrs. Todgers. "You're not a bit changed."

"What do you say to this?" cried Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand towards the young ladies. "Does this make me no older?"

"Not your daughters!" exclaimed the lady, raising her hands and clasping them. "Oh, no, Mr. Pecksniff! Your second, and her bridesmaid!"

Mr. Pecksniff smiled complacently; shook his head; and said, "My daughters, Mrs. Todgers: merely my daughters."

"Ah!" sighed the good lady, "I must believe you, for now I look at 'em I think I should have known 'em anywhere. My dear Miss Pecksniffs, how happy your pa has made me!"

She hugged them both; and being by this time overpowered by her feelings or the inclemency of the morning, jerked a little pocket handkerchief out of the little basket, and applied the same to her face.

"Now, my good madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I know the rules of your establishment, and that you only receive gentlemen boarders. But it occurred to me, when I left home, that perhaps you would give my daughters houseroom, and make an exception in their favour."

"Perhaps?" cried Mrs. Todgers ecstatically. "Perhaps?"

"I may say then, that I was sure you would," said Mr. Pecksniff. "I know that you have a little room of your own, and that they can be comfortable there, without appearing at the general table."

"Dear girls!" said Mrs. Todgers. "I must take that liberty once more."

Mrs. Todgers meant by this that she must embrace them once more, which she accordingly did, with great ardour. But the truth was, that, the house being full with the exception of one bed, which would now be occupied by Mr. Pecksniff, she wanted time for consideration; and so much time too (for it was a knotty point how to dispose of them), that even when this second embrace was over, she stood for some moments gazing at the sisters, with affection beaming in one eye, and calculation shining out of the other.

"I think I know how to arrange it," said Mrs. Todgers, at length. "A sofa bedstead in the little third room which opens from my own parlour—Oh, you dear girls!"

Thereupon she embraced them once more, observing that she could not decide which was most like their poor mother (which was highly

probable: seeing that she had never beheld that lady), but that she rather thought the youngest was; and then she said that as the gentlemen was to be down directly, and the ladies were fatigued with travelling, would they step into her room at once?

It was on the same floor; being, in fact, the back parlour; and had, as Mrs. Todgers said, the great advantage (in London) of not being overlooked; as they would see, when the fog cleared off. Nor was this a vain-glorious boast, for it commanded at a perspective of two feet, a brown wall with a black cistern on the top. The sleeping apartment designed for the young ladies was approached from this chamber by a mightily convenient little door, which would only open when fallen against by a strong person. It commanded from a similar point of sight another angle of the wall, and another side of the cistern. "Not the damp side," said Mrs. Todgers. "That is Mr. Jinkins's."

In the first of these sanctuaries a fire was speedily kindled by the youthful porter, who whistling at his work in the absence of Mrs. Todgers (not to mention his sketching figures on his corduroys with burnt firewood), and being afterwards taken by that lady in the fact, was dismissed with a box on his ears. Having prepared breakfast for the young ladies with her own hands, she withdrew to preside in the other room; where the joke at Mr. Jinkins's expense, seemed to be proceeding rather noisily.

"I won't ask you yet, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking in at the door, "how you like London. Shall I?"

"We haven't seen much of it, Pa!" cried Merry.

"Nothing, I hope," said Cherry. (Both very miserably.)

"Indeed," said Mr. Pecksniff, "that's true. We have our pleasure and our business too before us. All in good time. All in good time!"

Whether Mr. Pecksniff's business in London was as strictly professional as he had given his new pupil to understand, we shall see, to adopt that worthy man's phraseology, "all in good time."

CHAPTER IX.

TOWN AND TODGERS'S.

SURELY there never was, in any other borough, city, or hamlet in the world, such a singular sort of a place as Todgers's. And surely London, to judge from that part of

it which hemmed Todgers's round, and hustled it, and crushed it, and stuck its brick-and-mortar elbows into it, and kept the air from it, and stood perpetually between it and the light, was worthy of Todgers's, and qualified to be on terms of close relationship and alliance with hundreds and thousands of the odd family to which Todgers's belonged.

You couldn't walk about in Todgers's neighbourhood, as you could in any other neighbourhood. You groped your way for an hour through lanes and bye-ways, and court-yards and passages; and never once emerged upon anything that might be reasonably called a street. A kind of resigned distraction came over the stranger as he trod those devious mazes, and, giving himself up for lost, went in and out and round about and quietly turned back again when he came to a dead wall or was stopped by an iron railing, and felt that the means of escape might possibly present themselves in their own good time, but that to anticipate them was hopeless. Instances were known of people who, being asked to dine at Todgers's, had travelled round and round it for a weary time, with its very chimney-pots in view; and finding it, at last, impossible of attainment, had gone home again with a gentle melancholy on their spirits, tranquil and uncomplaining. Nobody had ever found Todgers's on a verbal direction, though given within a minute's walk of it. Cautious emigrants from Scotland or the North of England had been known to reach it safely by impressing a charity-boy, town-bred, and bringing him along with them; or by clinging tenaciously to the postman; but these were rare exceptions, and only went to prove the rule that Todgers's was in a labyrinth, whereof the mystery was known but to a chosen few.

Several fruit-brokers had their marts near Todgers's; and one of the first impressions wrought upon the stranger's senses was of oranges—of damaged oranges, with blue and green bruises on them, festering in boxes, or mouldering away in cellars. All day long, a stream of porters from the wharves beside the river, each bearing on his back a bursting chest of oranges, poured slowly through the narrow passages; while underneath the archway by the public-house, the knots of those who rested and regaled within, were piled from morning until night. Strange solitary pumps were found near Todgers's, hiding themselves for the most part in blind alleys, and keeping company with fire-ladders. There were churches also by dozens, with many a ghostly little church-yard, all overgrown with such straggling vegetation as springs

up spontaneously from damp, and graves, and rubbish. In some of these dingy resting-places, which bore much the same analogy to green church-yards, as the pots of earth for mignonette and wall-flower in the window overlooking them, did to rustic gardens—there were trees; tall trees; still putting forth their leaves in each succeeding year, with such a languishing remembrance of their kind (so one might fancy, looking on their sickly boughs) as birds in cages have of theirs. Here, paralysed old watchmen guarded the bodies of the dead at night, year after year, until at last they joined that solemn brotherhood; and, saving that they slept below the ground a sounder sleep than even they had ever known above it, and were shut up in another kind of box, their condition can hardly be said to have undergone any material change when they, in turn, were watched themselves.

Among the narrow thoroughfares at hand, there lingered, here and there, an ancient doorway of carved oak, from which, of old, the sounds of revelry and feasting often came; but now these mansions, only used for storehouses, were dark and dull, and, being filled with wool, and cotton, and the like—such heavy merchandise as stifles sound and stops the throat of echo—had an air of palpable deadness about them which, added to their silence and desertion, made them very grim. In like manner, there were gloomy court-yards in these parts, into which few but belated wayfarers ever strayed, and where vast bags and packs of goods, upward or downward bound, were for ever dangling between heaven and earth from lofty cranes. There were more trucks near Todgers's than you would suppose a whole city could ever need; not active trucks, but a vagabond race, for ever lounging in the narrow lanes before their masters' doors and stopping up the pass; so that when a stray hackney-coach or lumbering waggon came that way, they were the cause of such an uproar as enlivened the whole neighbourhood, and made the very bells in the next church-tower vibrate again. In the throats and maws of dark no-thoroughfares near Todgers's, individual wine-merchants and wholesale dealers in grocery-ware had perfect little towns of their own; and, deep among the very foundations of these buildings, the ground was undermined and burrowed out into stables, where cart-horses, troubled by rats, might be heard on a quiet Sunday, rattling their halters, as disturbed spirits in tales of haunted houses are said to clank their chains.

To tell of half the queer old taverns that had a drowsy and secret existence near Todgers's,

would fill a goodly book ; while a second volume no less capacious might be devoted to an account of the quaint old guests who frequented their dimly-lighted parlours. These were, in general, ancient inhabitants of that region ; born, and bred there from boyhood ; who had long since become wheezy and asthmatical, and short of breath, except in the article of story-telling : in which respect they were still marvellously long-winded. These gentry were much opposed to steam and all new-fangled ways, and held ballooning to be sinful, and deplored the degeneracy of the times ; which that particular member of each little club who kept the keys of the nearest church, professionally, always attributed to the prevalence of dissent and irreligion ; though the major part of the company inclined to the belief that virtue went out with hair-powder, and that old England's greatness had decayed amain with barbers.

As to Todgers's itself—speaking of it only as a house in that neighbourhood, and making no reference to its merits as a commercial boarding establishment—it was worthy to stand where it did. There was one staircase window in it, at the side of the house, on the ground-floor : which tradition said had not been opened for a hundred years at least, and which, abutting on an always dirty lane, was so begrimed and coated with a century's mud, that no one pane of glass could possibly fall out, though all were cracked and broken twenty times. But the grand mystery of Todgers's was the cellarage, approachable only by a little back door and a rusty grating : which cellarage within the memory of man had had no connexion with the house, but had always been the freehold property of somebody else, and was reported to be full of wealth : though in what shape—whether in silver, brass, or gold, or butts of wine, or casks of gunpowder—was matter of profound uncertainty and supreme indifference to Todgers's, and all its inmates.

The top of the house was worthy of notice. There was a sort of terrace on the roof, with posts and fragments of rotten lines, once intended to dry clothes upon ; and there were two or three tea-chests out there, full of earth, with forgotten plants in them, like old walking-sticks. Whoever climbed to this observatory, was stunned at first from having knocked his head against the little door in coming out ; and after that, was for the moment choked from having looked, perforce, straight down the kitchen chimney ; but these two stages over, there were things to gaze at from the top of Todgers's, well worth your seeing too. For first and foremost, if the

day were bright, you observed upon the house-tops, stretching far away, a long dark path ; the shadow of the Monument : and turning round, the tall original was close beside you, with every hair erect upon his golden head, as if the doings of the city frightened him. Then there were steeples, towers, belfries, shining vanes, and masts of ships : a very forest. Gables, house-tops, garret-windows, wilderness upon wilderness. Smoke and noise enough for all the world at once.

After the first glance, there were slight features in the midst of this crowd of objects, which sprung out from the mass without any reason, as it were, and took hold of the attention whether the spectator would or no. Thus, the revolving chimney-pots on one great stack of buildings, seemed to be turning gravely to each other every now and then, and whispering the result of their separate observation of what was going on below. Others, of a crook-backed shape, appeared to be maliciously holding themselves askew, that they might shut the prospect out and baffle Todgers's. The man who was mending a pen at an upper window over the way, became of paramount importance in the scene, and made a blank in it, ridiculously disproportionate in its extent, when he retired. The gambols of a piece of cloth upon the dyer's pole had far more interest for the moment than all the changing motion of the crowd. Yet even while the looker-on felt angry with himself for this, and wondered how it was, the tumult swelled into a roar ; the hosts of objects seemed to thicken and expand a hundredfold ; and after gazing round him, quite scared, he turned into Todgers's again, much more rapidly than he came out ; and ten to one he told M. Todgers afterwards that if he hadn't done so, he would certainly have come into the street by the shortest cut : that is to say, head-foremost.

So said the two Miss Pecksniffs, when they retired with Mrs. Todgers from this place of espial, leaving the youthful porter to close the door and follow them down-stairs : who being of a playful temperament, and contemplating with a delight peculiar to his sex and time of life, any chance of dashing himself into small fragments, lingered behind to walk upon the parapet.

It being the second day of their stay in London, the Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers were by this time highly confidential, insomuch that the last-named lady had already communicated the particulars of three early disappointments of a tender nature ; and had furthermore possessed her young friends with a general summary of the life, conduct, and character of Mr.

Todgers: who, it seemed, had cut his matrimonial career rather short, by unlawfully running away from his happiness, and establishing himself in foreign countries as a bachelor.

"Your pa was once a little particular in his attentions, my dears," said Mrs. Todgers, "but to be your ma was too much happiness denied me. You'd hardly know who this was done for perhaps?"

She called their attention to an oval miniature, like a little blister, which was tacked up over the kettle-holder, and in which there was a dreamy shadowing forth of her own visage.

"It's a speaking likeness!" cried the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"It was considered so once," said Mrs. Todgers, warming herself in a gentlemanly manner at the fire: "but I hardly thought you would have known it, my loves."

They would have known it anywhere. If they could have met with it in the street, or seen it in a shop window, they would have cried, "Good gracious! Mrs. Todgers!"

"Presiding over an establishment like this, makes sad havoc with the features, my dear Miss Pecksniffs," said Mrs. Todgers. "The gravy alone, is enough to add twenty years to one's age, I do assure you."

"Lor!" cried the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"The anxiety of that one item, my dears," said Mrs. Todgers, "keeps the mind continually upon the stretch. There is no such passion in human nature, as the passion for gravy among commercial gentlemen. It's nothing to say a joint won't yield—a whole animal wouldn't yield—the amount of gravy they expect each day at dinner. And what I have undergone in consequence," cried Mrs. Todgers, raising her eyes and shaking her head, "no one would believe!"

"Just like Mr. Pinch, Merry!" said Charity. "We have always noticed it in him, you remember?"

"Yes, my dear," giggled Merry, "but we have never given it him, you know."

"You, my dears, having to deal with your pa's pupils who can't help themselves, are able to take your own way," said Mrs. Todgers, "but in a commercial establishment, where any gentleman may say, any Saturday evening, 'Mrs. Todgers, this day week we part, in consequence of the cheese,' it is not so easy to preserve a pleasant understanding. Your pa was kind enough," added the good lady, "to invite me to take a ride with you to-day; and I think he mentioned that you were going to call upon Miss Pinch. Any relation to the gentleman you were speaking of just now, Miss Pecksniff?"

"For goodness sake, Mrs. Todgers," interposed the lively Merry, "don't call him a gentleman. My dear Cherry, Pinch a gentleman! The idea!"

"What a wicked girl you are!" cried Mrs. Todgers, embracing her with great affection. "You are quite a quiz I do declare! My dear Miss Pecksniff, what a happiness your sister's spirits must be to your pa and self!"

"He's the most hideous, goggle-eyed creature. Mrs. Todgers, in existence," resumed Merry: "quite an ogre. The ugliest, awkwardest, frightfullest being, you can imagine. This is his sister, so I leave you to suppose what *she* is. I shall be obliged to laugh outright, I know I shall!" cried the charming girl, "I never shall be able to keep my countenance. The notion of a Miss Pinch presuming to exist at all is sufficient to kill one, but to see her—oh my stars!"

Mrs. Todgers laughed immensely at the dear love's humour, and declared she was quite afraid of her, that she was. She was so very severe.

"Who is severe?" cried a voice at the door. "There is no such thing as severity in our family, I hope!" And then Mr. Pecksniff peeped smilingly into the room, and said, "May I come in, Mrs. Todgers?"

Mrs. Todgers almost screamed, for the little door of communication between that room and the inner one being wide open, there was a full disclosure of the sofa bedstead in all its monstrous impropriety. But she had the presence of mind to close this portal in the twinkling of an eye; and having done so, said, though not without confusion, "Oh yes, Mr. Pecksniff, you can come in if you please."

"How are we to-day," said Mr. Pecksniff jocosely; "and what are our plans? Are we ready to go and see Tom Pinch's sister? Ha, ha, ha! Poor Thomas Pinch!"

"Are we ready," returned Mrs. Todgers, nodding her head with mysterious intelligence, "to send a favourable reply to Mr. Jinkins's round-robin? That's the first question, Mr. Pecksniff."

"Why Mr. Jinkins's robin, my dear madam?" asked Mr. Pecksniff, putting one arm round Mercy, and the other round Mrs. Todgers, whom he seemed, in the abstraction of the moment, to mistake for Charity. "Why Mr. Jinkins's?"

"Because he began to get it up, and indeed always takes the lead in the house," said Mrs. Todgers, playfully. "That's why, sir."

"Jinkins is a man of superior talents," observed Mr. Pecksniff. "I have conceived a great regard for Jinkins. I take Jinkins's desire to pay polite attention to my daughters, as an ad-

ditional proof of the friendly feeling of Jinkins, Mrs. Todgers."

"Well now," returned that lady, "having said so much, you must say the rest, Mr. Pecksniff: so tell the dear young ladies all about it."

With these words, she gently eluded Mr. Pecksniff's grasp, and took Miss Charity into her own embrace; though whether she was impelled to this proceeding solely by the irrepressible affection she had conceived for that young lady, or whether it had any reference to a lowering, not to say distinctly spiteful expression which had been visible in her face for some moments, has never been exactly ascertained. Be this as it may, Mr. Pecksniff went on to inform his daughters of the purport and history of the round-robin aforesaid, which was in brief, that the commercial gentlemen who helped to make up the sum and substance of that noun of multitude signifying many, called Todgers's, desired the honour of their presence at the general table, so long as they remained in the house, and besought that they would grace the board at dinner-time next day, the same being Sunday. He further said, that Mrs. Todgers being a consenting party to this invitation, he was willing, for his part, to accept it; and so left them that he might write his gracious answer, the while they armed themselves with their best bonnets for the utter defeat and overthrow of Miss Pinch.

Tom Pinch's sister was governess in a family, a lofty family; perhaps the wealthiest brass and copper founder's family known to mankind. They lived at Camberwell; in a house so big and fierce, that its mere outside, like the outside of a giant's castle, struck terror into vulgar minds and made bold persons quail. There was a great front gate; with a great bell, whose handle was in itself a note of admiration; and a great lodge; which being close to the house, rather spoilt the look-out certainly, but made the look-in, tremendous. At this entry, a great porter kept constant watch and ward; and when he gave the visitor high leave to pass, he rang a second great bell, responsive to whose notes a great footman appeared in due time at the great hall-door, with such great tags upon his liveried shoulder that he was perpetually entangling and hooking himself among the chairs and tables, and led a life of torment which could scarcely have been surpassed, if he had been a blue-bottle in a world of cobwebs.

To this mansion, Mr. Pecksniff, accompanied by his daughters and Mrs. Todgers, drove gallantly in a one-horse fly. The foregoing ceremonies having been all performed, they were ushered into the house; and so, by degrees,

they got at last into a small room with books in it, where Mr. Pinch's sister was at that moment, instructing her eldest pupil: to wit, a premature little woman of thirteen years old, who had already arrived at such a pitch of whalebone and education that she had nothing girlish about her: which was a source of great rejoicing to all her relations and friends.

"Visitors for Miss Pinch!" said the footman. He must have been an ingenious young man, for he said it very cleverly: with a nice discrimination between the cold respect with which he would have announced visitors to the family, and the warm personal interest with which he would have announced visitors to the cook.

"Visitors for Miss Pinch!"

Miss Pinch rose hastily; with such tokens of agitation as plainly declared that her list of callers was not numerous. At the same time, the little pupil became alarmingly upright and prepared herself to take mental notes of all that might be said and done. For the lady of the establishment was curious in the natural history and habits of the animal called Governess, and encouraged her daughters to report thereon whenever occasion served; which was, in reference to all parties concerned, very laudable, improving, and pleasant.

It is a melancholy fact; but it must be related, that Mr. Pinch's sister was not at all ugly. On the contrary, she had a good face; a very mild and prepossessing face; and a pretty little figure—slight and short, but remarkable for its neatness. There was something of her brother, much of him indeed, in a certain gentleness of manner, and in her look of timid trustfulness; but she was so far from being a fright, or a dowdy, or a horror, or anything else, predicted by the two Miss Pecksniffs, that those young ladies naturally regarded her with great indignation, feeling that this was by no means what they had come to see.

Miss Mercy, as having the larger share of gaiety, bore up the best against this disappointment, and carried it off, in outward show at least, with a titter; but her sister, not caring to hide her disdain, expressed it pretty openly in her looks. As to Mrs. Todgers, she leaned on Mr. Pecksniff's arm and preserved a kind of genteel grimness, suitable to any state of mind, and involving any shade of opinion.

"Don't be alarmed, Miss Pinch," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking her hand condescendingly in one of his, and patting it with the other. "I have called to see you, in pursuance of a promise given to your brother, Thomas Pinch. My name—compose yourself, Miss Pinch—is Pecksniff."

The good man emphasised these words as though he would have said, "You see in me, young person, the benefactor of your race; the patron of your house; the preserver of your brother, who is fed with manna daily from my table; and in right of whom there is a considerable balance in my favour at present standing in the books beyond the sky. But I have no pride, for I can afford to do without it!"

The poor girl felt it all as if it had been Gospel Truth. Her brother writing in the fulness of his simple heart, had often told her so, and how much more! As Mr. Pecksniff ceased to speak, she hung her head, and dropped a tear upon his hand.

"Oh very well, Miss Pinch!" thought the sharp pupil, "crying before strangers, as if you didn't like the situation!"

"Thomas is well," said Mr. Pecksniff; "and sends his love and this letter. I cannot say, poor fellow, that he will ever be distinguished in our profession; but he has the will to do well, which is the next thing to having the power; and, therefore, we must bear with him. Eh?"

"I know he has the will, sir," said Tom Pinch's sister, "and I know how kindly and considerately you cherish it, for which neither he nor I can ever be grateful enough, as we very often say in writing to each other. The young ladies too," she added, glancing gratefully at his two daughters, "I know how much we owe to them."

"My dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to them with a smile: "Thomas's sister is saying something you will be glad to hear, I think."

"We can't take any merit to ourselves, papa!" cried Cherry, as they both apprised Tom Pinch's sister, with a curtsy, that they would feel obliged if she would keep her distance. "Mr. Pinch's being so well provided for is owing to you alone, and we can only say how glad we are to hear that he is as grateful as he ought to be."

"Oh very well, Miss Pinch!" thought the pupil again. "Got a grateful brother, living on other people's kindness!"

"It was very kind of you," said Tom Pinch's sister, with Tom's own simplicity, and Tom's own smile, "to come here: very kind indeed: though how great a kindness you have done me in gratifying my wish to see you, and to thank you with my own lips, you, who make so light of benefits conferred, can scarcely think."

"Very grateful; very pleasant; very proper," murmured Mr. Pecksniff.

"It makes me happy too," said Ruth Pinch, who now that her first surprise was over, had a chatty, cheerful way with her, and a single-

hearted desire to look upon the best side of everything, which was the very moral and image of Tom; "very happy to think that you will be able to tell him how more than comfortably I am situated here, and how unnecessary it is that he should ever waste a regret on my being cast upon my own resources. Dear me! So long as I heard that he was happy, and he heard that I was," said Tom's sister, "we could both bear, without one impatient or complaining thought, a great deal more than ever we have had to endure, I am very certain." And if ever the plain truth were spoken on this occasionally false earth, Tom's sister spoke it when she said that.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, whose eyes had in the mean time wandered to the pupil; "certainly. And how do *you* do, my very interesting child?"

"Quite well, I thank you, sir," replied that frosty innocent.

"A sweet face this, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to his daughters. "A charming manner!"

Both young ladies had been in ecstasies with the scion of a wealthy house (through whom the nearest road and shortest cut to her parents might be supposed to lie) from the first. Mrs. Todgers vowed that anything one quarter so angelic she had never seen. "She wanted but a pair of wings, a dear," said that good woman, "to be a young syrup,"—meaning, possibly, young sylph, or seraph.

"If you will give that to your distinguished parents, my amiable little friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, producing one of his professional cards, "and will say that I and my daughters—"

"And Mrs. Todgers, pa," said Merry.

"And Mrs. Todgers, of London," added Mr. Pecksniff, "that I, and my daughters, and Mrs. Todgers, of London, did not intrude upon them, as our object simply was to take some notice of Miss Pinch, whose brother is a young man in my employment; but that I could not leave this very chaste mansion, without adding my humble tribute, as an Architect, to the correctness and elegance of the owner's taste, and to his just appreciation of that beautiful art, to the cultivation of which I have devoted a life, and to the promotion of whose glory and advancement I have sacrificed a—a fortune—I shall be very much obliged to you."

"Missis's compliments to Miss Pinch," said the footman, suddenly appearing, and speaking in exactly the same key as before, "and begs to know wot my young lady is a learning of just now."

"Oh!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "here is the young man. *He* will take the card. With my compliments, if you please, young man. My dears, we are interrupting the studies. Let us go."

Some confusion was occasioned for an instant by Mrs. Todgers's unstrapping her little flat hand-basket, and hurriedly entrusting the "young man" with one of her own cards, which, in addition to certain detailed information relative to the terms of the commercial establishment, bore a foot-note to the effect that M. T. took that opportunity of thanking those gentlemen who had honoured her with their favours, and begged they would have the goodness, if satisfied with the table, to recommend her to their friends. But Mr. Pecksniff, with admirable presence of mind, recovered this document, and buttoned it up in his own pocket.

Then he said to Miss Pinch—with more condescension and kindness than ever, for it was desirable the footman should expressly understand that they were not friends of hers, but patrons:

"Good morning. Good bye. God bless you! You may depend upon my continued protection of your brother Thomas. Keep your mind quite at ease, Miss Pinch!"

"Thank you," said Tom's sister heartily: "a thousand times."

"Not at all," he retorted, patting her gently on the head. "Don't mention it. You will make me angry if you do. My sweet child"—to the pupil, "farewell! That fairy creature," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking in his pensive mood hard at the footman, as if he meant him, "has shed a vision on my path, refulgent in its nature, and not easy to be obliterated. My dears, are you ready?"

They were not quite ready yet, for they were still caressing the pupil. But they tore themselves away at length; and sweeping past Miss Pinch with each a haughty inclination of the head and a curtsy strangled in its birth, flounced into the passage.

The young man had rather a long job in showing them out; for Mr. Pecksniff's delight in the tastefulness of the house was such that he could not help often stopping (particularly when they were near the parlour door) and giving it expression, in a loud voice and very learned terms. Indeed, he delivered, between the study and the hall, a familiar exposition of the whole science of architecture as applied to dwelling-houses, and was yet in the freshness of his eloquence when they reached the garden.

"If you look," said Mr. Pecksniff, backing from the steps, with his head on one side, and his eyes half-shut that he might the better take in the proportions of the exterior: "If you look, my dears, at the cornice which supports the roof, and observe the airiness of its construction, especially where it sweeps the southern angle of the building, you will feel with me—How do you do, sir? I hope you're well?"

Interrupting himself with these words, he very politely bowed to a middle-aged gentleman at an upper window, to whom he spoke—not because the gentleman could hear him (for he certainly could not), but as an appropriate accompaniment to his salutation.

"I have no doubt, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, feigning to point out other beauties with his hand, "that that is the proprietor. I should be glad to know him. It might lead to something. Is he looking this way, Charity?"

"He is opening the window, pa!"

"Ha, ha!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, softly. "All right! He has found I'm professional. He heard me inside just now, I have no doubt. Don't look! With regard to the fluted pillars in the portico, my dears—"

"Hallo!" cried the gentleman.

"Sir, your servant!" said Mr. Pecksniff, taking off his hat: "I am proud to make your acquaintance."

"Come off the grass, will you!" roared the gentleman.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, doubtful of his having heard aright. "Did you—?"

"Come off the grass!" repeated the gentleman, warmly.

"We are unwilling to intrude, sir," Mr. Pecksniff smilingly began.

"But you *are* intruding," returned the other, "unwarrantably intruding—trespassing. You see a gravel walk, don't you? What do you think it's meant for? Open the gate there! Show that party out!"

With that, he clapped down the window again, and disappeared.

Mr. Pecksniff put on his hat, and walked with great deliberation and in profound silence to the fly, gazing at the clouds as he went, with great interest. After helping his daughters and Mrs. Todgers into that conveyance, he stood looking at it for some moments, as if he were not quite certain whether it was a carriage or a temple; but having settled this point in his mind, he got into his place, spread his hands out on his knees, and smiled upon the three beholders.

But his daughters, less tranquil-minded, burst into a torrent of indignation. This came, they said, of cherishing such creatures as the Pinches. This came of lowering themselves to their level. This came of putting themselves in the humiliating position of seeming to know such bold, audacious, cunning, dreadful girls as that. They had expected this. They had predicted it to Mrs. Todgers, as she (Todgers) could deponé, that very morning. To this, they added, that the owner of the house, supposing them to be Miss Pinch's friends, had acted, in their opinion, quite correctly, and had done no more than,

under such circumstances, might reasonably have been expected. To that, they added (with a trifling inconsistency), that he was a brute and a bear; and then they merged into a flood of tears, which swept away all wandering epithets before it.

Perhaps Miss Pinch was scarcely so much to blame in the matter as the Seraph, who, immediately on the withdrawal of the visitors, had hastened to report them at head-quarters, with a full account of their having presumptuously charged her with the delivery of a message afterwards consigned to the footman; which



“‘LO NOT REPINE, MY FRIENDS,’ SAID MR. PECKSNIFF, TENDERLY. ‘DO NOT WEEP FOR ME. IT IS CHRONIC.’”

outrage taken in conjunction with Mr. Pecksniff's unobtrusive remarks on the establishment, might possibly have had some share in their dismissal. Poor Miss Pinch, however, had to bear the brunt of it with both parties: being so severely taken to task by the Seraph's mother for having such vulgar acquaintances, that she was fain to retire to her own room in tears, which her natural cheerfulness and submission, and the delight of having seen Mr. Pecksniff, and having received a letter from her brother, were at first insufficient to repress.

As to Mr. Pecksniff he told them in the fly, that a good action was its own reward; and rather gave them to understand, that if he could have been kicked in such a cause, he would have liked it all the better. But this was no comfort to the young ladies, who scolded violently the whole way back, and even exhibited more than once, a keen desire to attack the devoted Mrs. Todgers: on whose personal appearance, but particularly on whose offending card and hand-basket, they were secretly inclined to lay the blame of half their failure.

Todgers's was in a great bustle that evening, partly owing to some additional domestic preparations for the morrow, and partly to the excitement always inseparable in that house from Saturday night, when every gentleman's linen arrived at a different hour in his own little bundle, with his private account pinned on the outside. There was always a great clinking of pattens down-stairs, too, until midnight or so, on Saturdays; together with a frequent gleaming of mysterious lights in the area; much working at the pump; and a constant jangling of the iron handle of the pail. Shrill altercations from time to time arose between Mrs. Todgers and unknown females in remote back kitchens; and sounds were occasionally heard, indicative of small articles of ironmongery and hardware being thrown at the boy. It was the custom of that youth on Saturdays, to roll up his shirt sleeves to his shoulders, and pervade all parts of the house in an apron of coarse green baize; moreover, he was more strongly tempted on Saturdays than on other days (it being a busy time), to make excursive bolts into the neighbouring alleys when he answered the door, and there to play at leap-frog and other sports with vagrant lads, until pursued and brought back by the hair of his head, or the lobe of his ear; thus, he was quite a conspicuous feature among the peculiar incidents of the last day in the week at Todgers's.

He was especially so on this particular Saturday evening, and honoured the Miss Pecksniffs with a deal of notice; seldom passing the door of Mrs. Todgers's private room, where they sat alone before the fire, working by the light of a solitary candle, without putting in his head and greeting them with some such compliments as, "There you are agin!" "An't it nice?"—and similar humorous attentions.

"I say," he whispered, stopping in one of his journeys to and fro, "young ladies, there's soup to-morrow. She's a making it now. An't she a putting in the water? Oh! not at all neither!"

In the course of answering another knock, he thrust in his head again.

"I say—there's fowls to-morrow. Not skinny ones. Oh no!"

Presently he called through the key-hole,

"There's a fish to-morrow—just come. Don't eat none of him!" and with this spectral warning, vanished again.

By-and-bye, he returned to lay the cloth for supper: it having been arranged between Mrs. Todgers and the young ladies, that they should partake of an exclusive veal-cutlet together in the privacy of that apartment. He entertained

them on this occasion by thrusting the lighted candle into his mouth, and exhibiting his face in a state of transparency; after the performance of which feat, he went on with his professional duties; brightening every knife as he laid it on the table, by breathing on the blade and afterwards polishing the same on the apron already mentioned. When he had completed his preparations, he grinned at the sisters, and expressed his belief that the approaching collation would be of "rather a spicy sort."

"Will it be long before it's ready, Bailey?" asked Mercy.

"No," said Bailey, "it *is* cooked. When I come up, she was dodging among the tender pieces with a fork, and eating of 'em."

But he had scarcely achieved the utterance of these words, when he received a manual compliment on the head, which sent him staggering against the wall; and Mrs. Todgers, dish in hand, stood indignantly before him.

"Oh you little villain!" said that lady. "Oh you bad, false boy!"

"No worse than yerself," retorted Bailey, guarding his head, on a principle invented by Mr. Thomas Cribb. "Ah! Come now! Do that agin, will yer!"

"He's the most dreadful child," said Mrs. Todgers, setting down the dish, "I ever had to deal with. The gentlemen spoil him to that extent, and teach him such things, that I'm afraid nothing but hanging will ever do him any good."

"Won't it!" cried Bailey. "Oh! Yes! Wot do you go a lowerin the table-beer for then, and destroying my constitooshun?"

"Go down-stairs, you vicious boy," said Mrs. Todgers, holding the door open. "Do you hear me? Go along!"

After two or three dexterous feints, he went and was seen no more that night, save once, when he brought up some tumblers and hot water, and much disturbed the two Miss Pecksniffs by squinting hideously behind the back of the unconscious Mrs. Todgers. Having done this justice to his wounded feelings, he retired underground; where, in company with a swarm of black beetles and a kitchen candle, he employed his faculties in cleaning boots and brushing clothes until the night was far advanced.

Benjamin was supposed to be the real name of this young retainer, but he was known by a great variety of names. Benjamin, for instance, had been converted into Uncle Ben, and that again had been corrupted into Uncle; which, by an easy transition, had again passed into Barnwell, in memory of the celebrated relative.

in that degree who was shot by his nephew George, while meditating in his garden at Camberwell. The gentlemen at Todgers's had a merry habit, too, of bestowing upon him, for the time being, the name of any notorious malefactor or minister; and sometimes, when current events were flat, they even sought the pages of history for these distinctions; as Mr. Pitt, Young Brownrigg, and the like. At the period of which we write, he was generally known among the gentlemen as Bailey junior; a name bestowed upon him in contradistinction, perhaps, to Old Bailey; and possibly as involving the recollection of an unfortunate lady of the same name, who perished by her own hand early in life, and has been immortalised in a ballad.

The usual Sunday dinner-hour at Todgers's was two o'clock,—a suitable time, it was considered, for all parties; convenient to Mrs. Todgers, on account of the baker's; and convenient to the gentlemen, with reference to their afternoon engagements. But on the Sunday which was to introduce the two Miss Pecksniffs to a full knowledge of Todgers's and its society, the dinner was postponed until five, in order that everything might be as genteel as the occasion demanded.

When the hour drew nigh, Bailey junior, testifying great excitement, appeared in a complete suit of cast-off clothes several sizes too large for him, and in particular, mounted a clean shirt of such extraordinary magnitude, that one of the gentlemen (remarkable for his ready wit) called him "collars" on the spot. At about a quarter before five a deputation, consisting of Mr. Jinkins, and another gentleman whose name was Gander, knocked at the door of Mrs. Todgers's room, and, being formally introduced to the two Miss Pecksniffs by their parent, who was in waiting, besought the honour of conducting them up-stairs.

The drawing-room at Todgers's was out of the common style; so much so indeed, that you would hardly have taken it to be a drawing-room, unless you were told so by somebody who was in the secret. It was floor-clothed all over; and the ceiling, including a great beam in the middle, was papered. Besides the three little windows, with seats in them, commanding the opposite archway, there was another window looking point blank, without any compromise at all about it, into Jinkins's bed-room; and high up, all along one side of the wall, was a strip of panes of glass, two-deep, giving light to the staircase. There were the oddest closets possible, with little casements in them like eight-day clocks, lurking in the wainscot, and taking

the shape of the stairs; and the very door itself (which was painted black) had two great glass eyes in its forehead, with an inquisitive green pupil in the middle of each.

Here, the gentlemen were all assembled. There was a general cry of "Hear, hear!" and "Bravo Jink!" when Mr. Jinkins appeared with Charity on his arm: which became quite rapturous as Mr. Gander followed, escorting Mercy, and Mr. Pecksniff brought up the rear with Mrs. Todgers.

Then, the presentations took place. They included a gentleman of a sporting turn, who propounded questions on jockey subjects to the editors of Sunday papers, which were regarded by his friends as rather stiff things to answer; and they included a gentleman of a theatrical turn, who had once entertained serious thoughts of "coming out," but had been kept in by the wickedness of human nature; and they included a gentleman of a debating turn, who was strong at speech-making; and a gentleman of a literary turn, who wrote squibs upon the rest, and knew the weak side of everybody's character but his own. There was a gentleman of a vocal turn, and a gentleman of a smoking turn, and a gentleman of a convivial turn; some of the gentlemen had a turn for whist, and a large proportion of the gentlemen had a strong turn for billiards and betting. They had all, it may be presumed, a turn for business; being all commercially employed in one way or other; and had, every one in his own way, a decided turn for pleasure to boot. Mr. Jinkins was of a fashionable turn; being a regular frequenter of the Parks on Sundays, and knowing a great many carriages by sight. He spoke mysteriously, too, of splendid women, and was suspected of having once committed himself with a Countess. Mr. Gander was of a witty turn, being indeed the gentleman who had originated the sally about "collars;" which sparkling pleasantry was now retailed from mouth to mouth, under the title of Gander's Last, and was received in all parts of the room with great applause. Mr. Jinkins, it may be added, was much the oldest of the party: being a fish-salesman's book-keeper, aged forty. He was the oldest boarder also; and in right of his double seniority, took the lead in the house, as Mrs. Todgers had already said.

There was considerable delay in the production of dinner, and poor Mrs. Todgers, being reproached in confidence by Jinkins, slipped in and out, at least twenty times to see about it; always coming back as though she had no such thing upon her mind, and hadn't been out at

all. But there was no hitch in the conversation, nevertheless; for one gentleman, who travelled in the perfumery line, exhibited an interesting nick-nack, in the way of a remarkable cake of shaving soap, which he had lately met with in Germany; and the gentleman of a literary turn repeated (by desire) some sarcastic stanzas he had recently produced on the freezing of the tank at the back of the house. These amusements, with the miscellaneous conversation arising out of them, passed the time splendidly, until dinner was announced by Bailey junior in these terms:

“The wittles is up!”

On which notice they immediately descended to the banquet-hall; some of the more facetious spirits in the rear taking down gentlemen as if they were ladies, in imitation of the fortunate possessors of the two Miss Pecksniffs.

Mr. Pecksniff said grace—a short and pious grace, invoking a blessing on the appetites of those present, and committing all persons who had nothing to eat, to the care of Providence: whose business (so said the grace, in effect) it clearly was, to look after them. This done, they fell to, with less ceremony than appetite; the table groaning beneath the weight, not only of the delicacies whereof the Miss Pecksniffs had been previously forewarned, but of boiled beef, roast veal, bacon, pies, and abundance of such heavy vegetables as are favourably known to house-keepers for their satisfying qualities. Besides which, there were bottles of stout, bottles of wine, bottles of ale; and divers other strong drinks, native and foreign.

All this was highly agreeable to the two Miss Pecksniffs, who were in immense request; sitting one on either hand of Mr. Jinkins at the bottom of the table; and who were called upon to take wine with some new admirer every minute. They had hardly ever felt so pleasant and so full of conversation, in their lives; Mercy, in particular, was uncommonly brilliant, and said so many good things in the way of lively repartee that she was looked upon as a prodigy. “In short,” as that young lady observed, “they felt now, indeed, that they were in London, and for the first time too.”

Their young friend Bailey sympathised in these feelings to the fullest extent, and, abating nothing of his patronage, gave them every encouragement in his power; favouring them, when the general attention was diverted from his proceedings, with many nods and winks and other tokens of recognition and occasionally touching his nose with a corkscrew, as if to express the Bacchanalian character of the meeting.

In truth, perhaps even the spirits of the two Miss Pecksniffs, and the hungry watchfulness of Mrs. Todgers, were less worthy of note than the proceedings of this remarkable boy, whom nothing disconcerted or put out of his way. If any piece of crockery—a dish or otherwise—chanced to slip through his hands (which happened once or twice), he let it go with perfect good-breeding, and never added to the painful emotions of the company by exhibiting the least regret. Nor did he, by hurrying to and fro, disturb the repose of the assembly, as many well-trained servants do; on the contrary, feeling the hopelessness of waiting upon so large a party, he left the gentlemen to help themselves to what they wanted, and seldom stirred from behind Mr. Jinkins's chair, where, with his hands in his pockets, and his legs planted pretty wide apart, he led the laughter, and enjoyed the conversation.

The dessert was splendid. No waiting either. The pudding-plates had been washed in a little tub outside the door while cheese was on, and though they were moist and warm with friction, still there they were again—up to the mark, and true to time. Quarts of almonds; dozens of oranges; pounds of raisins; stacks of biffins; soup-plates full of nuts.—Oh, Todgers's could do it when it chose! mind that.

Then more wine came on; red wines and white wines; and a large china bowl of punch, brewed by the gentleman of a convivial turn, who adjured the Miss Pecksniffs not to be despondent on account of its dimensions, as there were materials in the house for the concoction of half a dozen more of the same size. Good gracious, how they laughed! How they coughed when they sipped it, because it was so strong; and how they laughed again, when somebody vowed that but for its colour it might have been mistaken, in regard of its innocuous qualities, for new milk! What a shout of “No!” burst from the gentlemen when they pathetically implored Mr. Jinkins to suffer them to qualify it with hot water; and how blushing, by little and little, did each of them drink her whole glassful down to its very dregs!

Now comes the trying time. The sun, as Mr. Jinkins says (gentlemanly creature, Jinkins—never at a loss!), is about to leave the firmament. “Miss Pecksniff!” says Mrs. Todgers, softly, “will you—” “Oh dear, no more, Mrs. Todgers.” Mrs. Todgers rises; the two Miss Pecksniffs rise; all rise. Miss Mercy Pecksniff looks downward for her scarf. Where is it? Dear me, where *can* it be? Sweet girl, she has it on—not on her fair neck, but loose upon her flowing figure. A dozen hands assist her. She

is all confusion. The youngest gentleman in company thirsts to murder Jinkins. She skips and joins her sister at the door. Her sister has her arm about the waist of Mrs. Todgers. She winds her arm around her sister. Diana, what a picture! The last things visible are a shape and a skip. "Gentlemen, let us drink the ladies!"

The enthusiasm is tremendous. The gentleman of a debating turn rises in the midst, and suddenly lets loose a tide of eloquence which bears down everything before it. He is reminded of a toast—a toast to which they will respond. There is an individual present; he has him in his eye; to whom they owe a debt of gratitude. He repeats it—a debt of gratitude. Their rugged natures have been softened and ameliorated that day by the society of lovely woman. There is a gentleman in company whom two accomplished and delightful females regard with veneration, as the fountain of their existence. Yes, when yet the two Miss Pecksniffs lisped in language scarce intelligible, they called that individual "father!" There is great applause. He gives them "Mr. Pecksniff, and God bless him!" They all shake hands with Mr. Pecksniff, as they drink the toast. The youngest gentleman in company does so with a thrill; for he feels that a mysterious influence pervades the man who claims that being in the pink scarf for his daughter.

What saith Mr. Pecksniff in reply? or rather let the question be, What leaves he unsaid? Nothing. More punch is called for, and produced, and drunk. Enthusiasm mounts still higher. Every man comes out freely in his own character. The gentleman of a theatrical turn recites. The vocal gentleman regales them with a song. Gander leaves the Gander of all former feasts whole leagues behind. *He* rises to propose a toast. It is, The Father of Todgers's. It is their common friend Jink—it is Old Jink, if he may call him by that familiar and endearing appellation. The youngest gentleman in company utters a frantic negative. He won't have it—he can't bear it—it mustn't be. But his depth of feeling is misunderstood. He is supposed to be a little elevated; and nobody helps him.

Mr. Jinkins thanks them from his heart. It is, by many degrees, the proudest day in his humble career. When he looks around him on the present occasion, he feels that he wants words in which to express his gratitude. One thing he will say. He hopes it has been shown that Todgers's can be true to itself; and, an opportunity arising, that it can come out quite

as strong as its neighbours—perhaps stronger. He reminds them, amidst thunders of encouragement, that they have heard of a somewhat similar establishment in Cannon-street; and that they have heard it praised. He wishes to draw no invidious comparisons; he would be the last man to do it; but when that Cannon-street establishment shall be able to produce such a combination of wit and beauty as has graced that board that day, and shall be able to serve up (all things considered) such a dinner as that of which they have just partaken, he will be happy to talk to it. Until then, gentlemen, he will stick to Todgers's.

More punch, more enthusiasm, more speeches. Everybody's health is drunk, saving the youngest gentleman's in company. He sits apart, with his elbow on the back of a vacant chair, and glares disdainfully at Jinkins. Gander, in a convulsing speech, gives them the health of Bailey junior; hiccups are heard; and a glass is broken. Mr. Jinkins feels that it is time to join the ladies. He proposes, as a final sentiment, Mrs. Todgers. She is worthy to be remembered separately. Hear, hear. So she is: no doubt of it. They all find fault with her at other times; but every man feels, now, that he could die in her defence.

They go up-stairs, where they are not expected so soon; for Mrs. Todgers is asleep, Miss Charity is adjusting her hair, and Mercy, who has made a sofa of one of the window-seats, is in a gracefully recumbent attitude. She is rising hastily, when Mr. Jinkins implores her, for all their sakes, not to stir; she looks too graceful and too lovely, he remarks, to be disturbed. She laughs, and yields, and fans herself, and drops her fan, and there is a rush to pick it up. Being now installed, by one consent, as the beauty of the party, she is cruel and capricious, and sends gentlemen on messages to other gentlemen, and forgets all about them before they can return with the answer, and invents a thousand tortures, rending their hearts to pieces. Bailey brings up the tea and coffee. There is a small cluster of admirers round Charity; but they are only those who cannot get near her sister. The youngest gentleman in company is pale, but collected, and still sits apart; for his spirit loves to hold communion with itself, and his soul recoils from noisy revelers. She has a consciousness of his presence and his adoration. He sees it flashing sometimes in the corner of her eye. Have a care, Jinkins, ere you provoke a desperate man to frenzy!

Mr. Pecksniff had followed his younger friends

up-stairs, and taken a chair at the side of Mrs. Todgers. He had also spilt a cup of coffee over his legs without appearing to be aware of the circumstance; nor did he seem to know that there was muffin on his knee.

"And how have they used you, down-stairs, sir?" asked the hostess.

"Their conduct has been such, my dear madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "as I can never think of without emotion, or remember without a tear. Oh, Mrs. Todgers!"

"My goodness!" exclaimed that lady. "How low you are in your spirits, sir!"

"I am a man, my dear madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, shedding tears, and speaking with an imperfect articulation, "but I am also a father. I am also a widower. My feelings, Mrs. Todgers, will not consent to be entirely smothered, like the young children in the Tower. They are grown up, and the more I press the bolster on them, the more they look round the corner of it."

He suddenly became conscious of the bit of muffin, and stared at it intently: shaking his head the while, in a forlorn and imbecile manner, as if he regarded it as his evil genius, and mildly reproached it.

"She was beautiful, Mrs. Todgers," he said, turning his glazed eye again upon her, without the least preliminary notice. "She had a small property."

"So I have heard," cried Mrs. Todgers with great sympathy.

"Those are her daughters," said Mr. Pecksniff, pointing out the young ladies, with increased emotion.

Mrs. Todgers had no doubt of it.

"Mercy and Charity," said Mr. Pecksniff, "Charity and Mercy. Not unholy names, I hope?"

"Mr. Pecksniff!" cried Mrs. Todgers, "what a ghastly smile? Are you ill, sir?"

He pressed his hand upon her arm, and answered in a solemn manner, and a faint voice, "Chronic."

"Cholic?" cried the frightened Mrs. Todgers.

"Chron-ic," he repeated with some difficulty.

"Chronic. A chronic disorder. I have been its victim from childhood. It is carrying me to my grave."

"Heaven forbid!" cried Mrs. Todgers.

"Yes it is," said Mr. Pecksniff, reckless with despair. "I am rather glad of it, upon the whole. You are like her, Mrs. Todgers."

"Don't squeeze me so tight, pray, Mr. Pecksniff. If any of the gentlemen should notice us."

"For her sake," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Permit me—in honour of her memory. For the sake of a voice from the tomb. You are *very* like her, Mrs. Todgers! What a world this is!"

"Ah! Indeed you may say that!" cried Mrs. Todgers.

"I'm afraid it's a vain and thoughtless world," said Mr. Pecksniff, overflowing with despondency. "These young people about us. Oh! what sense have they of their responsibilities? None. Give me your other hand, Mrs. Todgers."

That lady hesitated, and said "she didn't like."

"Has a voice from the grave no influence?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with dismal tenderness. "This is irreligious! My dear creature."

"Hush!" urged Mrs. Todgers. "Really you mustn't."

"It's not me," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Don't suppose it's me; it's the voice; it's her voice."

Mrs. Pecksniff deceased, must have had an unusually thick and husky voice for a lady, and rather a stuttering voice, and to say the truth somewhat of a drunken voice, if it had ever borne much resemblance to that in which Mr. Pecksniff spoke just then. But perhaps this was delusion on his part.

"It has been a day of enjoyment, Mrs. Todgers, but still it has been a day of torture. It has reminded me of my loneliness. What am I in the world?"

"An excellent gentleman, Mr. Pecksniff," said Mrs. Todgers.

"There is consolation in that too," cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Am I?"

"There is no better man living," said Mrs. Todgers, "I am sure."

Mr. Pecksniff smiled through his tears, and slightly shook his head. "You are very good," he said, "thank you. It is a great happiness to me, Mrs. Todgers, to make young people happy. The happiness of my pupils is my chief object. I dote upon 'em. They dote upon me too—sometimes."

"Always," said Mrs. Todgers.

"When they say they haven't improved, ma'am," whispered Mr. Pecksniff, looking at her with profound mystery, and motioning to her to advance her ear a little closer to his mouth. "When they say they haven't improved, ma'am, and the premium was too high, they lie! I shouldn't wish it to be mentioned; you will understand me; but I say to you as to an old friend, they lie."

"Base wretches they must be!" said Mrs. Todgers.

"Madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "you are right. I respect you for that observation. A word in your ear. To Parents and Guardians—This is in confidence, Mrs. Todgers?"

"The strictest, of course!" cried that lady.

"To Parents and Guardians," repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "An eligible opportunity now offers, which unites the advantages of the best practical architectural education with the comforts of a home, and the constant association with some, who, however humble their sphere and limited their capacity—observe!—are not unmindful of their moral responsibilities."

Mrs. Todgers looked a little puzzled to know what this might mean, as well she might; for it was, as the reader may perchance remember, Mr. Pecksniff's usual form of advertisement when he wanted a pupil; and seemed to have no particular reference, at present, to anything. But Mr. Pecksniff held up his finger as a caution to her not to interrupt him.

"Do you know any parent or guardian, Mrs. Todgers," said Mr. Pecksniff, "who desires to avail himself of such an opportunity for a young gentleman? An orphan would be preferred. Do you know of any orphan with three or four hundred pound?"

Mrs. Todgers reflected, and shook her head.

"When you hear of an orphan with three or four hundred pound," said Mr. Pecksniff, "let that dear orphan's friends apply, by letter post-paid, to S. P., Post-office, Salisbury. I don't know who he is, exactly. Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Todgers," said Mr. Pecksniff, falling heavily against her: "chronic—chronic! Let's have a little drop of something to drink."

"Bless my life, Miss Pecksniff!" cried Mrs. Todgers, aloud, "your dear pa's took very poorly!"

Mr. Pecksniff straightened himself by a surprising effort, as every one turned hastily towards him; and standing on his feet, regarded the assembly with a look of ineffable wisdom. Gradually it gave place to a smile; a feeble, helpless, melancholy smile; bland, almost to sickness. "Do not repine, my friends," said Mr. Pecksniff, tenderly. "Do not weep for me. It is chronic." And with these words, after making a futile attempt to pull off his shoes, he fell into the fire-place.

The youngest gentleman in company had him out in a second. Yes, before a hair upon his head was singed, he had him on the hearth-rug—her father!

She was almost beside herself. So was her sister. Jinkins consoled them both. They all consoled them. Everybody had something to

say except the youngest gentleman in company, who with a noble self-devotion did the heavy work, and held up Mr. Pecksniff's head without being taken any notice of by anybody. At last they gathered round, and agreed to carry him up-stairs to bed. The youngest gentleman in company was rebuked by Jinkins for tearing Mr. Pecksniff's coat! Ha, ha! But no matter.

They carried him up-stairs, and crushed the youngest gentleman at every step. His bedroom was at the top of the house, and it was a long way; but they got him there in course of time. He asked them frequently upon the road for a little drop of something to drink. It seemed an idiosyncrasy. The youngest gentleman in company proposed a draught of water. Mr. Pecksniff called him opprobrious names for the suggestion.

Jinkins and Gander took the rest upon themselves, and made him as comfortable as they could, on the outside of his bed; and when he seemed disposed to sleep, they left him. But before they had all gained the bottom of the staircase, a vision of Mr. Pecksniff, strangely attired, was seen to flutter on the top landing. He desired to collect their sentiments, it seemed, upon the nature of human life.

"My friends," cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking over the banisters, "let us improve our minds by mutual inquiry and discussion. Let us be moral. Let us contemplate existence. Where is Jinkins?"

"Here," cried that gentleman. "Go to bed again!"

"To bed!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Bed! 'Tis the voice of the sluggard; I hear him complain; you have woke me too soon; I must slumber again. If any young orphan will repeat the remainder of that simple piece from Doctor Watts's collection, an eligible opportunity now offers."

Nobody volunteered.

"This is very soothing," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a pause. "Extremely so. Cool and refreshing; particularly to the legs! The legs of the human subject, my friends, are a beautiful production. Compare them with wooden legs, and observe the difference between the anatomy of nature and the anatomy of art. Do you know," said Mr. Pecksniff, leaning over the banisters, with an odd recollection of his familiar manner among new pupils at home, "that I should very much like to see Mrs. Todgers's notion of a wooden leg, if perfectly agreeable to herself!"

As it appeared impossible to entertain any reasonable hopes of him after this speech, Mr.

Jinkins and Mr. Gander went up-stairs again, and once more got him into bed. But they had not descended to the second floor before he was out again; nor, when they had repeated the process, had they descended the first flight, before he was out again. In a word, as often as he was shut up in his own room, he darted out afresh, charged with some new moral sentiment, which he continually repeated over the banisters, with extraordinary relish, and an irrepressible desire for the improvement of his fellow-creatures that nothing could subdue.

Under these circumstances, when they had got him into bed for the thirtieth time or so, Mr. Jinkins held him, while his companion went down-stairs in search of Bailey junior, with whom he presently returned. That youth, having been apprised of the service required of him, was in great spirits, and brought up a stool, a candle, and his supper; to the end that he might keep watch outside the bedroom door with tolerable comfort.

When he had completed his arrangements, they locked Mr. Pecksniff in, and left the key on the outside; charging the young page to listen attentively for symptoms of an apoplectic nature, with which the patient might be troubled, and, in case of any such presenting themselves, to summon them without delay: to which Mr. Bailey modestly replied that he hoped he knowed wot o'clock it was in ginerall, and didn't date his letters to his friends, from Todgers's, for nothing.

CHAPTER X.

CONTAINING STRANGE MATTER; ON WHICH MANY EVENTS IN THIS HISTORY MAY, FOR THEIR GOOD OR EVIL INFLUENCE, CHIEFLY DEPEND.

BUT Mr. Pecksniff came to town on business. Had he forgotten that? Was he always taking his pleasure with Todgers's jovial brood, unmindful of the serious demands, whatever they might be, upon his calm consideration? No.

Time and tide will wait for no man, saith the adage. But all men have to wait for time and tide. That tide which, taken at the flood, would lead Seth Pecksniff on to fortune, was marked down in the table, and about to flow. No idle Pecksniff lingered far inland, unmindful of the changes of the stream; but there, upon the water's edge, over his shoes already, stood the worthy creature, prepared to

wallow in the very mud, so that it slid towards the quarter of his hope.

The trustfulness of his two fair daughters was beautiful indeed. They had that firm reliance on their parent's nature, which taught them to feel certain that in all he did, he had his purpose straight and full before him. And that its noble end and object was himself, which almost of necessity included them, they knew. The devotion of these maids was perfect.

Their filial confidence was rendered the more touching, by their having no knowledge of their parent's real designs, in the present instance. All that they knew of his proceedings, was, that every morning, after the early breakfast, he repaired to the post-office and inquired for letters. That task performed, his business for the day was over; and he again relaxed, until the rising of another sun proclaimed the advent of another post.

This went on, for four or five days. At length, one morning, Mr. Pecksniff returned with a breathless rapidity, strange to observe in him, at other times so calm; and, seeking immediate speech with his daughters, shut himself up with them in private conference, for two whole hours. Of all that passed in this period, only the following words of Mr. Pecksniff's utterance are known:

"How he has come to change so very much (if it should turn out as I expect, that he has), we needn't stop to inquire. My dears, I have my thoughts upon the subject, but I will not impart them. It is enough that we will not be proud, resentful, or unforgiving. If he wants our friendship, he shall have it. We know our duty, I hope!"

That same day at noon, an old gentleman alighted from a hackney-coach at the post-office, and, giving his name, inquired for a letter addressed to himself, and directed to be left till called for. It had been lying there, some days. The superscription was in Mr. Pecksniff's hand, and it was sealed with Mr. Pecksniff's seal.

It was very short, containing indeed nothing more than an address "with Mr. Pecksniff's respectful, and (notwithstanding what has passed) sincerely affectionate regards." The old gentleman tore off the direction—scattering the rest in fragments to the winds—and giving it to the coachman, bade him drive as near that place as he could. In pursuance of these instructions he was driven to the Monument; where he again alighted, dismissed the vehicle, and walked towards Todgers's.

Though the face, and form, and gait of this old man, and even his grip of the stout stick on

which he leaned, were all expressive of a resolution not easily shaken, and a purpose (it matters little whether right or wrong, just now) such as in other days might have survived the rack, and had its strongest life in weakest death; still there were grains of hesitation in his mind, which made him now avoid the house he sought, and loiter to and fro in a gleam of sunlight, that brightened the little churchyard hard by. There may have been, in the presence of those idle heaps of dust among the busiest stir of life,

something to increase his wavering; but there he walked, awakening the echoes as he paced up and down, until the church clock, striking the quarters for the second time since he had been there, roused him from his meditation. Shaking off his incertitude as the air parted with the sound of the bells, he walked rapidly to the house, and knocked at the door.

Mr. Pecksniff was seated in the landlady's little room, and his visitor found him reading—by an accident: he apologised for it—an excel-



"WE SOMETIMES VENTURE TO CONSIDER HER RATHER A FINE FIGURE, SIR. SPEAKING AS AN ARTIST, I MAY PERHAPS BE PERMITTED TO SUGGEST, THAT ITS OUTLINE IS GRACEFUL AND CORRECT."

lent theological work. There were cake and wine upon a little table—by another accident, for which he also apologised. Indeed he said, he had given his visitor up, and was about to partake of that simple refreshment with his children, when he knocked at the door.

"Your daughters are well?" said old Martin, laying down his hat and stick.

Mr. Pecksniff endeavoured to conceal his agitation as a father, when he answered, Yes, they were. They were good girls, he said, very

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 6.

good. He would not venture to recommend Mr. Chuzzlewit to take the easy chair, or to keep out of the draught from the door. If he made any such suggestion, he would expose himself, he feared, to most unjust suspicion. He would, therefore, content himself with remarking that there was an easy chair in the room; and that the door was far from being airtight. The latter imperfection, he might perhaps venture to add, was not uncommonly to be met with in old houses.

The old man sat down in the easy chair, and after a few moments' silence, said :

"In the first place, let me thank you for coming to London so promptly, at my almost unexplained request : I need scarcely add, at my cost."

"At *your* cost, my good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, in a tone of great surprise.

"It is not," said Martin, waving his hand impatiently, "my habit to put my—well! my relatives—to any personal expense to gratify my caprices."

"Caprices, my good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"That is scarcely the proper word either, in this instance," said the old man. "No. You are right."

Mr. Pecksniff was inwardly very much relieved to hear it, though he didn't at all know why.

"You are right," repeated Martin. "It is not a caprice. It is built up on reason, proof, and cool comparison. Caprices never are. Moreover, I am not a capricious man. I never was."

"Most assuredly not," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"How do you know?" returned the other quickly. "You are to begin to know it now. You are to test and prove it, in time to come. You and yours are to find that I can be constant, and am not to be diverted from my end. Do you hear?"

"Perfectly," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"I very much regret," Martin resumed, looking steadily at him, and speaking in a slow and measured tone : "I very much regret that you and I held such a conversation together, as that which passed between us, at our last meeting. I very much regret that I laid open to you what were then my thoughts of you, so freely as I did. The intentions that I bear towards you, now, are of another kind ; deserted by all in whom I have ever trusted ; hoodwinked and beset by all who should help and sustain me ; I fly to you for refuge. I confide in you to be my ally ; to attach yourself to me by ties of Interest and Expectation—" he laid great stress upon these words, though Mr. Pecksniff particularly begged him not to mention it ; "and to help me to visit the consequences of the very worst species of meanness, dissimulation, and subtlety, on the right heads."

"My noble sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, catching at his outstretched hand. "And *you* regret the having harboured unjust thoughts of me! *you* with those grey hairs!"

"Regrets," said Martin, "are the natural property of grey hairs ; and I enjoy, in common

with all other men, at least my share of such inheritance. And so enough of that. I regret having been severed from you so long. If I had known you sooner, and sooner used you as you well deserve, I might have been a happier man."

Mr. Pecksniff looked up to the ceiling, and clasped his hands in rapture.

"Your daughters," said Martin, after a short silence. "I don't know them. Are they like you?"

"In the nose of my eldest and the chin of my youngest, Mr. Chuzzlewit," returned the widower, "their sainted parent—not myself, their mother—lives again."

"I don't mean in person," said the old man. "Morally—morally."

"'Tis not for me to say," retorted Mr. Pecksniff with a gentle smile. "I have done my best, sir."

"I could wish to see them," said Martin ; "are they near at hand?"

They were, very near ; for they had, in fact, been listening at the door, from the beginning of this conversation until now, when they precipitately retired. Having wiped the signs of weakness from his eyes, and so given them time to get up-stairs, Mr. Pecksniff opened the door, and mildly cried in the passage,

"My own darlings, where are you?"

"Here, my dear pa!" replied the distant voice of Charity.

"Come down into the back parlour, if you please, my love," said Mr. Pecksniff, "and bring your sister with you."

"Yes, my dear pa," cried Merry ; and down they came directly (being all obedience), singing as they came.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the two Miss Pecksniffs when they found a stranger with their dear papa. Nothing could surpass their mute amazement when he said, "My children, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" But when he told them that Mr. Chuzzlewit and he were friends, and that Mr. Chuzzlewit had said such kind and tender words as pierced his very heart, the two Miss Pecksniffs cried with one accord, "Thank Heaven for this!" and fell upon the old man's neck. And when they had embraced him with such fervour of affection that no words can describe it, they grouped themselves about his chair, and hung over him : as figuring to themselves no earthly joy like that of ministering to his wants, and crowding into the remainder of his life, the love they would have diffused over their whole existence, from infancy, if he—dear obdurate!—had but consented to receive the precious offering.

The old man looked attentively from one to the other, and then at Mr. Pecksniff, several times.

"What," he asked of Mr. Pecksniff, happening to catch his eye in its descent: for until now it had been piously upraised, with something of that expression which the poetry of ages has attributed to a domestic bird, when breathing its last amid the ravages of an electric storm: "What are their names?"

Mr. Pecksniff told him, and added, rather hastily—his calumniators would have said, with a view to any testamentary thoughts that might be flitting through old Martin's mind—"Perhaps, my dears, you had better write them down. Your humble autographs are of no value in themselves, but affection may prize them."

"Affection," said the old man, "will expend itself on the living originals. Do not trouble yourselves, my girls, I shall not so easily forget you, Charity and Mercy, as to need such tokens of remembrance. Cousin!"

"Sir!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with alacrity.

"Do you never sit down?"

"Why—yes—occasionally, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, who had been standing all this time.

"Will you do so now?"

"Can you ask me," returned Mr. Pecksniff, slipping into a chair immediately, "whether I will do anything that you desire?"

"You talk confidently," said Martin, "and you mean well; but I fear you don't know what an old man's humours are. You don't know what it is to be required to court his likings and dislikings; to adapt yourself to his prejudices; to do his bidding, be it what it may; to bear with his distrusts and jealousies; and always still be zealous in his service. When I remember how numerous these failings are in me, and judge of their occasional enormity by the injurious thoughts I lately entertained of you, I hardly dare to claim you for my friend."

"My worthy sir," returned his relative, "how *can* you talk in such a painful strain! What was more natural than that you should make one slight mistake, when in all other respects you were so very correct, and have had such reason—such very sad and undeniable reason—to judge of every one about you in the worst light!"

"True," replied the other. "You are very lenient with me."

"We always said—my girls and I," cried Mr. Pecksniff with increasing obsequiousness, "that while we mourned the heaviness of our misfortune in being confounded with the base and mercenary, still we could not wonder at it. My dears, you remember?"

Oh vividly! A thousand times!

"We uttered no complaint," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Occasionally we had the presumption to console ourselves with the remark that Truth would in the end prevail, and Virtue be triumphant; but not often. My loves, you recollect?"

Recollect! Could he doubt it? Dearest pa, what strange, unnecessary questions!

"And when I saw you," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, with still greater deference, "in the little, unassuming village where we take the liberty of dwelling, I said you were mistaken in me, my dear sir: that was all, I think?"

"No—not all," said Martin, who had been sitting with his hand upon his brow for some time past, and now looked up again: "you said much more, which, added to other circumstances that have come to my knowledge, opened my eyes. You spoke to me, disinterestedly, on behalf of—I needn't name him. You know whom I mean."

Trouble was expressed in Mr. Pecksniff's visage, as he pressed his hot hands together, and replied, with humility, "Quite disinterestedly, sir, I assure you."

"I know it," said old Martin, in his quiet way. "I am sure of it. I said so. It was disinterested too, in you, to draw that herd of harpies off from me, and be their victim yourself; most other men would have suffered them to display themselves in all their rapacity, and would have striven to rise, by contrast, in my estimation. You felt for me, and drew them off, for which I owe you many thanks. Although I left the place, I know what passed behind my back, you see!"

"You amaze me, sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff: which was true enough.

"My knowledge of your proceedings," said the old man, "does not stop at this. You have a new inmate in your house—"

"Yes, sir," rejoined the architect, "I have."

"He must quit it," said Martin.

"For—for yours?" asked Mr. Pecksniff, with a quavering mildness.

"For any shelter he can find," the old man answered. "He has deceived you."

"I hope not," said Mr. Pecksniff eagerly. "I trust not. I have been extremely well disposed towards that young man. I hope it cannot be shown that he has forfeited all claim to my protection. Deceit—deceit, my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, would be final. I should hold myself bound on proof of deceit, to renounce him instantly."

The old man glanced at both his fair supporters, but especially at Miss Mercy, whom,

indeed, he looked full in the face, with a greater demonstration of interest than had yet appeared in his features. His gaze again encountered Mr. Pecksniff, as he said, composedly:

"Of course you know that he has made his matrimonial choice?"

"Oh dear!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, rubbing his hair up very stiff upon his head, and staring wildly at his daughters. "This is becoming tremendous!"

"You know the fact?" repeated Martin.

"Surely not without his grandfather's consent and approbation, my dear sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Don't tell me that. For the honour of human nature, say you're not about to tell me that."

"I thought he had suppressed it," said the old man.

The indignation felt by Mr. Pecksniff at this terrible disclosure, was only to be equalled by the kindling anger of his daughters. What! Had they taken to their hearth and home a secretly contracted serpent; a crocodile who had made a furtive offer of his hand; an imposition on society; a bankrupt bachelor with no effects, trading with the spinster world on false pretences! And oh, to think that he should have disobeyed and practised on that sweet, that venerable gentleman, whose name he bore; that kind and tender guardian; his more than father—to say nothing at all of mother—horrible, horrible! To turn him out with ignominy would be treatment, much too good. Was there nothing else that could be done to him? Had he incurred no legal pains and penalties? Could it be that the statutes of the land were so remiss as to have affixed no punishment to such delinquency? Monster; how basely had they been deceived!

"I am glad to find you second me so warmly," said the old man, holding up his hand to stay the torrent of their wrath. "I will not deny that it is a pleasure to me to find you so full of zeal. We will consider that topic as disposed of."

"No, my dear sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "not as disposed of, until I have purged my house of this pollution."

"That will follow," said the old man, "in its own time. I look upon that as done."

"You are very good, sir," answered Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his hand. "You do me honour. You may look upon it as done, I assure you."

"There is another topic," said Martin, "on which I hope you will assist me. You remember Mary, cousin?"

"The young lady that I mentioned to you, my dears, as having interested me so very much," remarked Mr. Pecksniff. "Excuse me interrupting you, sir."

"I told you her history;" said the old man.

"Which I also mentioned, you will recollect, my dears," cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Silly girls, Mr. Chuzzlewit—quite moved by it, they were!"

"Why look now," said Martin, evidently pleased: "I feared I should have had to urge her case upon you, and ask you to regard her favourably for my sake. But I find you have no jealousies! Well! You have no cause for any, to be sure. She has nothing to gain, from me, my dears, and she knows it."

The two Miss Pecksniffs murmured their approval of this wise arrangement, and their cordial sympathy with its interesting object.

"If I could have anticipated what has come to pass between us four," said the old man, thoughtfully: "but it is too late to think of that. You would receive her courteously, young ladies, and be kind to her, if need were?"

Where was the orphan whom the two Miss Pecksniffs would not have cherished in their sisterly bosom? But when that orphan was commended to their care by one on whom the dammed-up love of years was gushing forth, what exhaustless stores of pure affection yearned to expend themselves upon her!

An interval ensued, during which Mr. Chuzzlewit, in an absent frame of mind, sat gazing at the ground, without uttering a word: and as it was plain that he had no desire to be interrupted in his meditations, Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters were profoundly silent also. During the whole of the foregoing dialogue, he had borne his part with a cold, passionless promptitude, as though he had learned and painfully rehearsed it all, a hundred times. Even when his expressions were warmest and his language most encouraging, he had retained the same manner, without the least abatement. But now there was a keener brightness in his eye, and more expression in his voice, as he said, awakening from his thoughtful mood:

"You know what will be said of this? Have you reflected?"

"Said of what, my dear sir?" Mr. Pecksniff asked.

"Of this new understanding between us."

Mr. Pecksniff looked benevolently sagacious, and at the same time far above all earthly misconstruction, as he shook his head, and observed that a great many things would be said of it, no doubt.

"A great many," rejoined the old man. "Some will say that I dote in my old age; that illness has shaken me; that I have lost all strength of mind; and have grown childish. You can bear that?"

Mr. Pecksniff answered that it would be dreadfully hard to bear, but he thought he could, if he made a great effort.

"Others will say—I speak of disappointed, angry people only—that you have lied and fawned, and worried yourself through dirty ways into my favour; by such concessions and such crooked deeds, such meannesses and vile endurances as nothing could repay: no, not the legacy of half the world we live in. You can bear that?"

Mr. Pecksniff made reply that this would be also very hard to bear, as reflecting, in some degree, on the discernment of Mr. Chuzzlewit. Still he had a modest confidence that he could sustain the calumny, with the help of a good conscience, and that gentleman's friendship.

"With the great mass of slanderers," said old Martin, leaning back in his chair, "the tale, as I clearly foresee, will run thus: That to mark my contempt for the rabble whom I despised, I chose from among them the very worst, and made him do my will, and pampered and enriched him at the cost of all the rest. That, after casting about for the means of a punishment which should rankle in the bosoms of these kites the most, and strike into their gall, I devised this scheme at a time when the last link in the chain of grateful love and duty that held me to my race, was roughly snapped asunder: roughly, for I loved him well; roughly, for I had ever put my trust in his affection; roughly, for that he broke it when I loved him most—God help me!—and he without a pang could throw me off, while I clung about his heart! Now," said the old man, dismissing this passionate outburst, as suddenly as he had yielded to it, "is your mind made up to bear this likewise? Lay your account with having it to bear, and put no trust in being set right by me."

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," cried Pecksniff in an ecstasy, "for such a man as you have shown yourself to be this day; for a man so injured, yet so very humane; for a man so—I am at a loss what precise term to use—yet at the same time so remarkably—I don't know how to express my meaning; for such a man as I have described, I hope it is no presumption to say that I, and I am sure I may add my children also (my dears, we perfectly

agree in this, I think?), would bear anything whatever!"

"Enough," said Martin. "You can charge no consequences on me. When do you return home?"

"Whenever you please, my dear sir. To-night, if you desire it."

"I desire nothing," returned the old man, "that is unreasonable. Such a request would be. Will you be ready to return at the end of this week?"

The very time of all others that Mr. Pecksniff would have suggested if it had been left to him to make his own choice. As to his daughters—the words, "Let us be at home on Saturday, dear pa," were actually upon their lips.

"Your expenses, cousin," said Martin, taking a folded slip of paper from his pocket-book, "may possibly exceed that amount. If so, let me know the balance that I owe you, when we next meet. It would be useless if I told you where I live just now: indeed, I have no fixed abode. When I have, you shall know it. You and your daughters may expect to see me before long: in the mean time I need not tell you, that we keep our own confidence. What you will do when you get home, is understood between us. Give me no account of it at any time; and never refer to it in any way. I ask that, as a favour. I am commonly a man of few words, cousin; and all that need be said just now is said, I think."

"One glass of wine—one morsel of this homely cake?" cried Mr. Pecksniff, venturing to detain him. "My dears!"

The sisters flew to wait upon him.

"Poor girls!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "You will excuse their agitation, my dear sir. They are made up of feeling. A bad commodity to go through the world with, Mr. Chuzzlewit! My youngest daughter is almost as much of a woman as my eldest, is she not, sir?"

"Which *is* the youngest?" asked the old man.

"Mercy, by five years," said Mr. Pecksniff. "We sometimes venture to consider her rather a fine figure, sir. Speaking as an artist, I may perhaps be permitted to suggest, that its outline is graceful and correct. I am naturally," said Mr. Pecksniff, drying his hands upon his handkerchief, and looking anxiously in his cousin's face at almost every word, "proud, if I may use the expression, to have a daughter who is constructed upon the best models."

"She seems to have a lively disposition," observed Martin.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "that is quite remarkable. You have defined her charac-

ter, my dear sir, as correctly as if you had known her from her birth. She *has* a lively disposition. I assure you, my dear sir, that in our unpretending home, her gaiety is delightful."

"No doubt," returned the old man.

"Charity, upon the other hand," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is remarkable for strong sense, and for rather a deep tone of sentiment, if the partiality of a father may be excused in saying so. A wonderful affection between them, my dear sir! Allow me to drink your health. Bless you!"

"I little thought," retorted Martin, "but a month ago, that I should be breaking bread and pouring wine with you. I drink to you."

Not at all abashed by the extraordinary abruptness with which these latter words were spoken, Mr. Pecksniff thanked him devoutly.

"Now let me go," said Martin, putting down the wine when he had merely touched it with his lips. "My dears, good morning!"

But this distant form of farewell was by no means tender enough for the yearnings of the young ladies, who again embraced him with all their hearts—with all their arms at any rate—to which parting caresses their new-found friend submitted with a better grace than might have been expected from one who, not a moment before, had pledged their parent in such a very uncomfortable manner. These endearments terminated, he took a hasty leave of Mr. Pecksniff, and withdrew, followed to the door by both father and daughters, who stood there, kissing their hands, and beaming with affection until he disappeared: though, by the way, he never once looked back, after he had crossed the threshold.

When they returned into the house, and were again alone in Mrs. Todgers's room, the two young ladies exhibited an unusual amount of gaiety; insomuch that they clapped their hands, and laughed, and looked with roguish aspects and a bantering air upon their dear papa. This conduct was so very unaccountable, that Mr. Pecksniff (being singularly grave himself) could scarcely choose but ask them what it meant; and took them to task, in his gentle manner, for yielding to such light emotions.

"If it was possible to divine any cause for this merriment, even the most remote," he said, "I should not reprove you. But when you can have none whatever—oh, really, really!"

This admonition had so little effect on Mercy, that she was obliged to hold her handkerchief before her rosy lips, and to throw herself back in her chair, with every demonstration of extreme amusement; which want of duty so offended

Mr. Pecksniff that he reproved her in set terms, and gave her his parental advice to correct herself in solitude and contemplation. But at that juncture they were disturbed by the sound of voices in dispute; and as it proceeded from the next room, the subject matter of the altercation quickly reached their ears.

"I don't care that! Mrs. Todgers," said the young gentleman who had been the youngest gentleman in company on the day of the festival; "I don't care *that*, ma'am," said he, snapping his fingers, "for Jinkins. Don't suppose I do."

"I am quite certain you don't, sir," replied Mrs. Todgers. "You have too independent a spirit, I know, to yield to anybody. And quite right. There is no reason why you should give way to any gentleman. Everybody must be well aware of that."

"I should think no more of admitting daylight into the fellow," said the youngest gentleman, in a desperate voice, "than if he was a bull-dog."

Mrs. Todgers did not stop to inquire whether, as a matter of principle, there was any particular reason for admitting daylight even into a bull-dog, otherwise than by the natural channel of his eyes: but she seemed to wring her hands: and she moaned.

"Let him be careful," said the youngest gentleman. "I give him warning. No man shall step between me and the current of my vengeance. I know a Cove—" he used that familiar epithet in his agitation, but corrected himself, by adding, "a gentleman of property, I mean—who practises with a pair of pistols (fellows too,) of his own. If I am driven to borrow 'em, and to send a friend to Jinkins, a tragedy will get into the papers. That's all."

Again Mrs. Todgers moaned.

"I have borne this long enough," said the youngest gentleman, "but now my soul rebels against it, and I won't stand it any longer. I left home originally, because I had that within me which wouldn't be domineered over by a sister; and do you think I'm going to be put down by *him*? No."

"It is very wrong in Mr. Jinkins; I know it is perfectly inexcusable in Mr. Jinkins, if he intends it," observed Mrs. Todgers.

"If he intends it!" cried the youngest gentleman. "Don't he interrupt and contradict me on every occasion? Does he ever fail to interpose himself between me and anything or anybody that he sees I have set my mind upon? Does he make a point of always pretending to forget me, when he's pouring out the beer? Does he make bragging remarks about his razors, and insulting allusions to people who

have no necessity to shave more than once a week? But let him look out; he'll find himself shaved, pretty close, before long; and so I tell him!"

The young gentleman was mistaken in this closing sentence, inasmuch as he never told it to Jinkins, but always to Mrs. Todgers.

"However," he said, "these are not proper subjects for ladies' ears. All I've got to say to you, Mrs. Todgers, is,—a week's notice from next Saturday. The same house can't contain that miscrancy and me any longer. If we get over the intermediate time without bloodshed, you may think yourself pretty fortunate. I don't myself expect we shall."

"Dear, dear!" cried Mrs. Todgers, "what would I have given to have prevented this? To lose you, sir, would be like losing the house's right-hand. So popular as you are among the gentlemen; so generally looked up to; and so much liked! I do hope you'll think better of it; if on nobody else's account, on mine."

"There's Jinkins," said the youngest gentleman, moodily. "Your favourite. He'll console you, and the gentlemen too, for the loss of twenty such as me. I'm not understood in this house. I never have been."

"Don't run away with that opinion, sir!" cried Mrs. Todgers, with a show of honest indignation. "Don't make such a charge as that against the establishment, I must beg of you. It is not so bad as that comes to, sir. Make any remark you please against the gentlemen, or against me; but don't say you're not understood in this house."

"I'm not treated as if I was," said the youngest gentleman.

"There you make a great mistake, sir," returned Mrs. Todgers, in the same strain. "As many of the gentlemen and I have often said, you are too sensitive. That's where it is. You are of too susceptible a nature; it's in your spirit."

The young gentleman coughed.

"And as," said Mrs. Todgers, "as to Mr. Jinkins, I must beg of you, if we *are* to part, to understand that I don't abet Mr. Jinkins by any means. Far from it. I could wish that Mr. Jinkins would take a lower tone in this establishment; and would not be the means of raising differences between me and gentlemen that I can much less bear to part with, than I could with Mr. Jinkins. Mr. Jinkins is not such a boarder, sir," added Mrs. Todgers, "that all considerations of private feeling and respect give way before him. Quite the contrary, I assure you."

The young gentleman was so much mollified

by these and similar speeches on the part of Mrs. Todgers, that he and that lady gradually changed positions; so that she became the injured party, and he was understood to be the injurer; but in a complimentary, not in an offensive sense; his cruel conduct being attributable to his exalted nature, and to that alone. So, in the end, the young gentleman withdrew his notice, and assured Mrs. Todgers of his unalterable regard: and having done so, went back to business.

"Goodness me, Miss Pecksniffs!" cried that lady, as she came into the back room, and sat wearily down, with her basket on her knees, and her hands folded upon it, "what a trial of temper it is to keep a house like this! You must have heard most of what has just passed. Now did you ever hear the like?"

"Never!" said the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"Of all the ridiculous young fellows that ever I had to deal with," resumed Mrs. Todgers, "that is the most ridiculous and unreasonable. Mr. Jinkins is hard upon him sometimes, but not half as hard as he deserves. To mention such a gentleman as Mr. Jinkins, in the same breath with *him*—you know it's too much! and yet he's as jealous of him, bless you, as if he was his equal."

The young ladies were greatly entertained by Mrs. Todgers's account, no less than with certain anecdotes illustrative of the youngest gentleman's character, which she went on to tell them. But Mr. Pecksniff looked quite stern and angry: and when she had concluded, said in a solemn voice:

"Pray, Mrs. Todgers, if I may inquire, what does that young gentleman contribute towards the support of these premises?"

"Why, sir, for what *he* has, he pays about eighteen shillings a week," said Mrs. Todgers.

"Eighteen shillings a week!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff.

"Taking one week with another; as near that as possible," said Mrs. Todgers.

Mr. Pecksniff rose from his chair, folded his arms, looked at her, and shook his head.

"And do you mean to say, ma'am—is it possible, Mrs. Todgers—that for such a miserable consideration as eighteen shillings a week, a female of your understanding can so far demean herself as to wear a double face, even for an instant?"

"I am forced to keep things on the square if I can, sir," faltered Mrs. Todgers. "I must preserve peace among them, and keep my connexion together, if possible, Mr. Pecksniff. The profit is very small."

"The profit!" cried that gentleman, laying great stress upon the word. "The profit, Mrs. Todgers! You amaze me!"

He was so severe, that Mrs. Todgers shed tears.

"The profit!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "The profit of dissimulation! To worship the golden calf of Baal, for eighteen shillings a week!"

"Don't in your own goodness be too hard upon me, Mr. Pecksniff," cried Mrs. Todgers, taking out her handkerchief.

"Oh, Calf, Calf!" cried Mr. Pecksniff mournfully. "Oh, Baal, Baal! oh my friend Mrs. Todgers! To barter away that precious jewel, self-esteem, and cringe to any mortal creature—for eighteen shillings a week!"

He was so subdued and overcome by the reflection, that he immediately took down his hat from its peg in the passage, and went out for a walk, to compose his feelings. Anybody passing him in the street might have known him for a good man at first sight; for his whole figure teemed with a consciousness of the moral homily he had read to Mrs. Todgers.

Eighteen shillings a week! Just, most just, thy censure, upright Pecksniff! Had it been for the sake of a ribbon, star, or garter; sleeves of lawn, a great man's smile, a seat in parliament, a tap upon the shoulder from a courtly sword; a place, a party, or a thriving lie, or eighteen thousand pounds, or even eighteen hundred;—but to worship the golden calf for eighteen shillings a week! oh pitiful, pitiful!

CHAPTER XI.

WHEREIN A CERTAIN GENTLEMAN BECOMES PARTICULAR IN HIS ATTENTIONS TO A CERTAIN LADY; AND MORE COMING EVENTS THAN ONE, CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.

THE family were within two or three days of their departure from Mrs. Todgers's, and the commercial gentlemen were to a man despondent and not to be comforted, because of the approaching separation, when Bailey junior, at the jocund time of noon, presented himself before Miss Charity Pecksniff, then sitting with her sister in the banquet chamber, hemming six new pocket handkerchiefs for Mr. Jinkins; and having expressed a hope, preliminary and pious, that he might be blest, gave her, in his pleasant way, to understand that a visitor attended to pay his respects to her, and was at that moment waiting in the

drawing-room. Perhaps this last announcement showed in a more striking point of view than many lengthened speeches could have done, the trustfulness and faith of Bailey's nature; since he had, in fact, last seen the visitor upon the door-mat, where, after signifying to him that he would do well to go up-stairs, he had left him to the guidance of his own sagacity. Hence it was at least an even chance that the visitor was then wandering on the roof of the house, or vainly seeking to extricate himself from a maze of bedrooms; Todgers's being precisely that kind of establishment in which an unpiloted stranger is pretty sure to find himself in some place where he least expects and least desires to be.

"A gentleman for me!" cried Charity, pausing in her work; "my gracious, Bailey!"

"Ah!" said Bailey. "It *is* my gracious, an't it? Wouldn't I be gracious neither, not if I wos him!"

The remark was rendered somewhat obscure in itself, by reason (as the reader may have observed) of a redundancy of negatives; but accompanied by action expressive of a faithful couple walking arm-in-arm towards a parochial church, mutually exchanging looks of love, it clearly signified this youth's conviction that the caller's purpose was of an amorous tendency. Miss Charity affected to reprove so great a liberty; but she could not help smiling. He was a strange boy to be sure. There was always some ground of probability and likelihood mingled with his absurd behaviour. That was the best of it!

"But I don't know any gentleman, Bailey," said Miss Pecksniff. "I think you must have made a mistake."

Mr. Bailey smiled at the extreme kindness of such a supposition; and regarded the young ladies with unimpaired affability.

"My dear Merry," said Charity, "who *can* it be? Isn't it odd? I have a great mind not to go to him really. So very strange you know!"

The younger sister plainly considered that this appeal had its origin in the pride of being called upon and asked for; and that it was intended as an assertion of superiority, and a retaliation upon her for having captured the commercial gentlemen. Therefore, she replied, with great affection and politeness, that it was, no doubt, very strange indeed; and that she was totally at a loss to conceive what the ridiculous person unknown could mean by it.

"Quite impossible to divine!" said Charity, with some sharpness, "though still, at the same time, you needn't be angry, my dear."

"Thank you," retorted Merry, singing at her needle. "I am quite aware of that, my love."

"I am afraid your head is turned, you silly thing," said Cherry.

"Do you know, my dear," said Merry, with engaging candour, "that I have been afraid of that, myself, all along! So much incense and nonsense, and all the rest of it, is enough to turn a stronger head than mine. What a relief it must be to you, my dear, to be so very comfortable in that respect, and not to be worried

by those odious men! How *do* you do it, Cherry?"

This artless inquiry might have led to turbulent results, but for the strong emotions of delight evinced by Bailey junior, whose relish in the turn the conversation had lately taken was so acute, that it impelled and forced him to the instantaneous performance of a dancing step, extremely difficult in its nature, and only to be achieved in a moment of ecstasy, which is commonly called *The Frog's Hornpipe*. A manifestation so lively, brought to their immediate



"THE DOOR OF A SMALL GLASS OFFICE, WHICH WAS PARTITIONED OFF FROM THE REST OF THE ROOM, WAS SLOWLY OPENED, AND A LITTLE BLEAR-EYED, WEAZEN-FACED, ANCIENT MAN CAME CREEPING OUT."

recollection the great virtuous precept, "Keep up appearances whatever you do," in which they had been educated. They forbore at once, and jointly signified to Mr. Bailey that if he should presume to practise that figure any more in their presence, they would instantly acquaint Mrs. Todgers with the fact, and would demand his condign punishment at the hands of that lady. The young gentleman having expressed the bitterness of his contrition by affecting to wipe away scalding tears with his apron, and afterwards feigning to wring a vast amount of water from that garment, held the door open

while Miss Charity passed out; and so that damsel went in state up-stairs to receive her mysterious adorer.

By some strange concurrence of favourable circumstances he had found out the drawing-room, and was sitting there alone.

"Ah, cousin!" he said. "Here I am, you see. You thought I was lost, I'll be bound. Well! how do you find yourself by this time?"

Miss Charity replied that she was quite well; and gave Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit her hand.

"That's right," said Mr. Jonas, "and you've

got over the fatigues of the journey, have you? I say—how's the other one?"

"My sister is very well, I believe," returned the young lady. "I have not heard her complain of any indisposition, sir. Perhaps you would like to see her, and ask her yourself?"

"No, no, cousin!" said Mr. Jonas, sitting down beside her on the window-seat. "Don't be in a hurry. There's no occasion for that, you know. What a cruel girl you are!"

"It's impossible for you to know," said Cherry, "whether I am or not."

"Well, perhaps it is," said Mr. Jonas. "I say—did you think I was lost? You haven't told me that."

"I didn't think at all about it," answered Cherry.

"Didn't you, though?" said Jonas, pondering upon this strange reply. "—Did the other one?"

"I am sure it's impossible for me to say what my sister may, or may not have thought on such a subject," cried Cherry. "She never said anything to me about it one way or other."

"Didn't she laugh about it?" inquired Jonas.

"No. She didn't even laugh about it," answered Charity.

"She's a terrible one to laugh, an't she?" said Jonas, lowering his voice.

"She is very lively," said Cherry.

"Liveliness is a pleasant thing—when it don't lead to spending money. An't it?" asked Mr. Jonas.

"Very much so, indeed," said Cherry, with a demureness of manner that gave a very disinterested character to her assent.

"Such liveliness as yours I mean, you know," observed Mr. Jonas, as he nudged her with his elbow. "I should have come to see you before, but I didn't know where you was. How quick you hurried off, that morning!"

"I was amenable to my Papa's directions," said Miss Charity.

"I wish he had given me his direction," returned her cousin, "and then I should have found you out before. Why, I shouldn't have found you even now, if I hadn't met him in the street this morning. What a sleek, sly chap he is! Just like a tom-cat, an't he?"

"I must trouble you to have the goodness to speak more respectfully of my Papa, Mr. Jonas," said Charity. "I can't allow such a tone as that, even in jest."

"Ecod, you may say what you like of my father, then, and so I give you leave," said Jonas. "I think it's liquid aggravation that circulates through his veins, and not regular blood. How old should you think my father was, cousin?"

"Old, no doubt," replied Miss Charity; "but a fine old gentleman."

"A fine old gentleman!" repeated Jonas, giving the crown of his hat an angry knock. "Ah! It's time he was thinking of being drawn out a little finer too. Why he's eighty!"

"Is he indeed?" said the young lady.

"And ecod," cried Jonas, "now he's gone so far without giving in, I don't see much to prevent his being ninety; no, nor even a hundred. Why, a man with any feeling ought to be ashamed of being eighty—let alone more. Where's his religion I should like to know, when he goes flying in the face of the Bible like that! Three-score-and-ten's the mark; and no man with a conscience, and a proper sense of what's expected of him, has any business to live longer."

Is any one surprised at Mr. Jonas making such a reference to such a book for such a purpose? Does any one doubt the old saw, that the Devil (being a layman) quotes Scripture for his own ends? If he will take the trouble to look about him, he may find a greater number of confirmations of the fact, in the occurrences of any single day, than the steam-gun can discharge balls in a minute.

"But there's enough of my father," said Jonas; "it's of no use to go putting one's-self out of the way by talking about *him*. I called to ask you to come and take a walk, cousin, and see some of the sights; and to come to our house afterwards, and have a bit of something. Pecksniff will most likely look in in the evening, he says, and bring you home. See, here's his writing; I made him put it down this morning, when he told me he shouldn't be back before I came here; in case you wouldn't believe me. There's nothing like proof, is there? Ha, ha! I say—you'll bring the other one, you know!"

Miss Charity cast her eyes upon her father's autograph, which merely said—"Go, my children, with your cousin. Let there be union among us when it is possible;" and after enough of hesitation to impart a proper value to her consent, withdrew, to prepare her sister and herself for the excursion. She soon returned, accompanied by Miss Mercy, who was by no means pleased to leave the brilliant triumphs of Todgers's for the society of Mr. Jonas and his respected father.

"Aha!" cried Jonas. "There you are, are you?"

"Yes, fright," said Mercy, "here I am; and I would much rather be anywhere else, I assure you."

"You don't mean that," cried Mr. Jonas. "You can't, you know. It isn't possible."

"You can have what opinion you like, fright,"

retorted Mercy. "I am content to keep mine; and mine is that you are a very unpleasant, odious, disagreeable person." Here she laughed heartily, and seemed to enjoy herself very much.

"Oh, you're a sharp gal!" said Mr. Jonas. "She's a regular teaser, an't she, cousin?"

Miss Charity replied in effect, that she was unable to say what the habits and propensities of a regular teaser might be, and that even if she possessed such information, it would ill become her to admit the existence of any creature with such an unceremonious name in her family; far less in the person of a beloved sister, "whatever," added Cherry with an angry glance, "whatever her real nature may be."

"Well, my dear!" said Merry, "the only observation I have to make, is, that if we don't go out at once, I shall certainly take my bonnet off again, and stay at home."

This threat had the desired effect of preventing any further altercation, for Mr. Jonas immediately proposed an adjournment, and the same being carried unanimously, they departed from the house straightway. On the door-step, Mr. Jonas gave an arm to each cousin; which act of gallantry being observed by Bailey junior, from the garret window, was by him saluted with a loud and violent fit of coughing, to which paroxysm he was still the victim when they turned the corner.

Mr. Jonas inquired in the first instance if they were good walkers, and being answered "Yes," submitted their pedestrian powers to a pretty severe test; for he showed them as many sights, in the way of bridges, churches, streets, outsides of theatres, and other free spectacles, in that one forenoon, as most people see in a twelvemonth. It was observable in this gentleman that he had an insurmountable distaste to the insides of buildings; and that he was perfectly acquainted with the merits of all shows, in respect of which there was any charge for admission, which it seemed were every one detestable, and of the very lowest grade of merit. He was so thoroughly possessed with this opinion, that when Miss Charity happened to mention the circumstance of their having been twice or thrice to the theatre with Mr. Jenkins and party, he inquired, as a matter of course, "where the orders came from?" and being told that Mr. Jenkins and party paid, was beyond description entertained, observing that "they must be nice flats, certainly;" and often in the course of the walk, bursting out again into a perfect convulsion of laughter at the surpassing silliness of those gentlemen, and (doubtless) at his own superior wisdom.

When they had been out for some hours and were thoroughly fatigued, it being by that time twilight, Mr. Jonas intimated that he would show them one of the best pieces of fun with which he was acquainted. This joke was of a practical kind, and its humour lay in taking a hackney-coach to the extreme limits of possibility for a shilling. Happily it brought them to the place where Mr. Jonas dwelt, or the young ladies might have rather missed the point and cream of the jest.

The old-established firm of Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son, Manchester Warehousemen, and so forth, had its place of business in a very narrow street somewhere behind the Post Office; where every house was in the brightest summer morning very gloomy; and where light porters watered the pavement, each before his own employer's premises, in fantastic patterns, in the dog-days; and where spruce gentlemen with their hands in the pockets of symmetrical trousers, were always to be seen in warm weather, contemplating their undeniable boots in dusty warehouse doorways, which appeared to be the hardest work they did, except now and then carrying pens behind their ears. A dim, dirty, smoky, tumble-down, rotten old house it was, as anybody would desire to see; but there the firm of Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son transacted all their business and their pleasure too, such as it was; for neither the young man nor the old had any other residence, or any care or thought beyond its narrow limits.

Business, as may be readily supposed, was the main thing in this establishment; inasmuch indeed that it shouldered comfort out of doors, and jostled the domestic arrangements at every turn. Thus in the miserable bedrooms there were files of moth-eaten letters hanging up against the walls; and linen rollers, and fragments of old patterns, and odds and ends of spoiled goods, strewn upon the ground; while the meagre bedsteads, washing-stands, and scraps of carpet, were huddled away into corners as objects of secondary consideration, not to be thought of but as disagreeable necessities, furnishing no profit, and intruding on the one affair of life. The single sitting-room was on the same principle, a chaos of boxes and old papers, and had more counting-house stools in it than chairs: not to mention a great monster of a desk straddling over the middle of the floor, and an iron safe sunk into the wall above the fire-place. The solitary little table for purposes of refection and social enjoyment, bore as fair a proportion to the desk and other business furniture, as the graces and harmless relaxations

of life had ever done, in the persons of the old man and his son, to their pursuit of wealth. It was meanly laid out, now, for dinner; and in a chair before the fire, sat Anthony himself, who rose to greet his son and his fair cousins as they entered.

An ancient proverb warns us that we should not expect to find old heads upon young shoulders; to which it may be added that we seldom meet with that unnatural combination, but we feel a strong desire to knock them off; merely from an inherent love we have of seeing things in their right places. It is not improbable that many men, in no wise choleric by nature, felt this impulse rising up within them, when they first made the acquaintance of Mr. Jonas; but if they had known him more intimately in his own house, and had sat with him at his own board, it would assuredly have been paramount to all other considerations.

"Well, ghost!" said Mr. Jonas, dutifully addressing his parent by that title. "Is dinner nearly ready?"

"I should think it was," rejoined the old man.

"What's the good of that?" rejoined the son. "I should think it was. I want to know."

"Ah! I don't know for certain," said Anthony.

"You don't know for certain," rejoined his son in a lower tone. "No. You don't know anything for certain, *you* don't. Give me your candle here. I want it for the gals."

Anthony handed him a battered old office candlestick, with which Mr. Jonas preceded the young ladies to the nearest bedroom, where he left them to take off their shawls and bonnets; and returning, occupied himself in opening a bottle of wine, sharpening the carving-knife, and muttering compliments to his father, until they and the dinner appeared together. The repast consisted of a hot leg of mutton with greens and potatoes; and the dishes having been set upon the table by a slipshod old woman, they were left to enjoy it after their own manner.

"Bachelor's Hall you know, cousin," said Mr. Jonas to Charity. "I say—the other one will be having a laugh at this when she gets home, won't she? Here; you sit on the right side of me, and I'll have her upon the left. Other one, will you come here?"

"You're such a fright," replied Mercy, "that I know I shall have no appetite if I sit so near you: but I suppose I must."

"An't she lively?" whispered Mr. Jonas to

the elder sister, with his favourite elbow emphasis.

"Oh I really don't know!" replied Miss Pecksniff, tartly. "I am tired of being asked such ridiculous questions."

"What's that precious old father of mine about now?" said Mr. Jonas, seeing that his parent was travelling up and down the room, instead of taking his seat at table. "What are you looking for?"

"I've lost my glasses, Jonas," said old Anthony.

"Sit down without your glasses, can't you?" returned his son. "You don't eat or drink out of 'em, I think; and where's that sleepy-headed old Chuffey got to! Now, stupid. Oh! you know your name, do you?"

It would seem that he didn't, for he didn't come until the father called. As he spoke, the door of a small glass office, which was partitioned off from the rest of the room, was slowly opened, and a little blear-eyed, weazen-faced, ancient man came creeping out. He was of a remote fashion, and dusty, like the rest of the furniture; he was dressed in a decayed suit of black; with breeches garnished at the knees with rusty wisps of ribbon, the very paupers of shoe-strings; on the lower portion of his spindle legs were dingy worsted stockings of the same colour. He looked as if he had been put away and forgotten half a century before, and somebody had just found him in a lumber-closet.

Such as he was, he came slowly creeping on towards the table, until at last he crept into the vacant chair, from which, as his dim faculties became conscious of the presence of strangers, and those strangers ladies, he rose again, apparently intending to make a bow. But he sat down once more, without having made it, and breathing on his shrivelled hands to warm them, remained with his poor blue nose immovable above his plate, looking at nothing, with eyes that saw nothing, and a face that meant nothing. Take him in that state, and he was an embodiment of nothing. Nothing else.

"Our clerk," said Mr. Jonas, as host and master of the ceremonies: "Old Chuffey."

"Is he deaf?" inquired one of the young ladies.

"No, I don't know that he is. He an't deaf, is he, father?"

"I never heard him say he was," replied the old man.

"Blind?" inquired the young ladies.

"N—no. I never understood that he was at

all blind," said Jonas, carelessly. "You don't consider him so, do you, father?"

"Certainly not," replied Anthony.

"What is he then?"

"Why, I'll tell you what he is," said Mr. Jonas, apart to the young ladies, "he's precious old, for one thing; and I an't best pleased with him for that, for I think my father must have caught it of him. He's a strange old chap, for another," he added in a louder voice, "and don't understand any one hardly, but *him!*" He pointed to his honoured parent with the carving-fork, in order that they might know whom he meant.

"How very strange!" cried the sisters.

"Why, you see," said Mr. Jonas, "he's been addling his old brains with figures and book-keeping all his life; and twenty year ago or so he went and took a fever. All the time he was out of his head (which was three weeks) he never left off casting up; and he got to so many million at last that I don't believe he's ever been quite right since. We don't do much business now though, and he an't a bad clerk."

"A very good one," said Anthony.

"Well! He an't a dear one at all events," observed Jonas; "and he earns his salt, which is enough for our look-out. I was telling you that he hardly understands any one except my father; he always understands him, though, and wakes up quite wonderful. He's been used to his ways so long, you see! Why, I've seen him play whist, with my father for a partner, and a good rubber too; when he had no more notion what sort of people he was playing against, than you have."

"Has he no appetite?" asked Merry.

"Oh, yes," said Jonas, plying his own knife and fork very fast. "He eats—when he's helped. But he don't care whether he waits a minute or an hour, as long as father's here; so when I'm at all sharp set, as I am to-day, I come to him after I've taken the edge off my own hunger, you know. Now, Chuffey, stupid, are you ready?"

Chuffey remained immovable.

"Always a perverse old file, he was," said Mr. Jonas, coolly helping himself to another slice. "Ask him, father."

"Are you ready for your dinner, Chuffey?" asked the old man.

"Yes, yes," said Chuffey, lighting up into a sentient human creature at the first sound of the voice, so that it was at once a curious and quite a moving sight to see him. "Yes, yes. Quite ready, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Quite ready, sir. All ready, all ready, all ready." With that he

stopped, smilingly, and listened for some further address; but being spoken to no more, the light forsook his face by little and little, until he was nothing again.

"He'll be very disagreeable, mind," said Jonas, addressing his cousins as he handed the old man's portion to his father. "He always chokes himself when it an't broth. Look at him, now. Did you ever see a horse with such a wall-eyed expression as he's got? If it hadn't been for the joke of it, I wouldn't have let him come in to-day; but I thought he'd amuse you."

The poor old subject of this humane speech, was, happily for himself, as unconscious of its purport, as of most other remarks that were made in his presence. But the mutton being tough, and his gums weak, he quickly verified the statement relative to his choking propensities, and underwent so much in his attempts to dine, that Mr. Jonas was infinitely amused; protesting that he had seldom seen him better company in all his life, and that he was enough to make a man split his sides with laughing. Indeed, he went so far as to assure the sisters, that in this point of view he considered Chuffey superior to his own father; which, as he significantly added, was saying a great deal.

It was strange enough that Anthony Chuzzlewit, himself so old a man, should take a pleasure in these gibings of his estimable son, at the expense of the poor shadow at their table. But he did, unquestionably: though not so much—to do him justice—with reference to their ancient clerk, as in exultation at the sharpness of Jonas. For the same reason, that young man's coarse allusions, even to himself, filled him with a stealthy glee: causing him to rub his hands and chuckle covertly, as if he said in his sleeve, "*I* taught him. *I* trained him. This is the heir of my bringing-up. Sly, cunning, and covetous, he'll not squander my money. I worked for this; I hoped for this; it has been the great end and aim of my life."

What a noble end and aim it was to contemplate in the attainment, truly! But there be some who manufacture idols after the fashion of themselves, and fail to worship them when they are made; charging their deformity on outraged nature. Anthony was better than these at any rate.

Chuffey boggled over his plate so long, that Mr. Jonas, losing patience, took it from him at last with his own hands, and requested his father to signify to that venerable person that he had better "*peg away at his bread:*" which Anthony did.

"Aye, aye!" cried the old man, brightening

up as before, when this was communicated to him in the same voice; "quite right, quite right. He's your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit! Bless him for a sharp lad! Bless him, bless him!"

Mr. Jonas considered this so particularly childish, perhaps with some reason—that he only laughed the more, and told his cousins that he was afraid one of these fine days, Chuffey would be the death of him. The cloth was then removed, and the bottle of wine set upon the table, from which Mr. Jonas filled the young ladies' glasses, calling on them not to spare it, as they might be certain there was plenty more where that came from. But, he added with some haste after this sally, that it was only his joke, and they wouldn't suppose him to be in earnest, he was sure.

"I shall drink," said Anthony, "to Pecksniff. Your father, my dears. A clever man, Pecksniff. A wary man! A hypocrite, though, eh? A hypocrite, girls, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Well, so he is. Now, among friends—he is. I don't think the worse of him for that, unless it is that he overdoes it. You may overdo anything, my darlings. You may overdo even hypocrisy. Ask Jonas!"

"You can't overdo taking care of yourself," observed that hopeful gentleman with his mouth full.

"Do you hear that, my dears?" cried Anthony, quite enraptured. "Wisdom, wisdom! A good exception, Jonas. No. It's not easy to overdo that."

"Except," whispered Mr. Jonas to his favourite cousin, "except when one lives too long. Ha, ha! Tell the other one that—I say!"

"Good gracious me!" said Cherry, in a petulant manner. "You can tell her yourself, if you wish, can't you?"

"She seems to make such game of one," replied Mr. Jonas.

"Then why need you trouble yourself about her?" said Charity. "I am sure she doesn't trouble herself much about you."

"Don't she though?" asked Jonas.

"Good gracious me, need I tell you that she don't?" returned the young lady.

Mr. Jonas made no verbal rejoinder, but he glanced at Mercy with an odd expression in his face; and said *that* wouldn't break his heart, she might depend upon it. Then he looked on Charity with even greater favour than before, and besought her, as his polite manner was, to "come a little closer."

"There's another thing that's not easily over-

done, father," remarked Jonas, after a short silence.

"What's that?" asked the father, grinning already in anticipation.

"A bargain," said the son. "Here's the rule for bargains—'Do other men, for they would do you.' That's the true business precept. All others are counterfeits."

The delighted father applauded this sentiment to the echo; and was so much tickled by it, that he was at the pains of imparting the same to his ancient clerk, who rubbed his hands, nodded his palsied head, winked his watery eyes, and cried in his whistling tones, "Good! good! Your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" with every feeble demonstration of delight that he was capable of making. But this old man's enthusiasm had the redeeming quality of being felt in sympathy with the only creature to whom he was linked by ties of long association, and by his present helplessness. And if there had been anybody there, who cared to think about it, some dregs of a better nature unawakened, might perhaps have been desecrated through that very medium, melancholy though it was, yet lingering at the bottom of the worn-out cask, called Chuffey.

As matters stood, nobody thought or said anything upon the subject; so Chuffey fell back into a dark corner on one side of the fire-place, where he always spent his evenings, and was neither seen nor heard again that night; save once, when a cup of tea was given him, in which he was seen to soak his bread mechanically. There was no reason to suppose that he went to sleep at these seasons, or that he heard, or saw, or felt, or thought. He remained, as it were, frozen up—if any term expressive of such a vigorous process can be applied to him—until he was again thawed for the moment by a word or touch from Anthony.

Miss Charity made tea by desire of Mr. Jonas, and felt and looked so like the lady of the house, that she was in the prettiest confusion imaginable; the more so, from Mr. Jonas sitting close beside her, and whispering a variety of admiring expressions in her ear. Miss Mercy, for her part, felt the entertainment of the evening to be so distinctly and exclusively theirs, that she silently deplored the commercial gentlemen—at that moment, no doubt, wearying for her return—and yawned over yesterday's newspaper. As to Anthony, he went to sleep outright, so Jonas and Cherry had a clear stage to themselves as long as they chose to keep possession of it.

When the tea-tray was taken away, as it was at last, Mr. Jonas produced a dirty pack of

cards, and entertained the sisters with divers small feats of dexterity: whercof the main purpose of every one was, that you were to decoy somebody into laying a wager with you that you couldn't do it; and were then immediately to win and pocket his money. Mr. Jonas informed them that these accomplishments were in high vogue in the most intellectual circles, and that large amounts were constantly changing hands on such hazards. And it may be remarked that he fully believed this; for there is a simplicity of cunning no less than a simplicity of innocence; and in all matters where a lively faith in knavery and meanness was required as the ground-work of belief, Mr. Jonas was one of the most credulous of men. His ignorance, which was stupendous, may be taken into account, if the reader pleases, separately.

This fine young man had all the inclination to be a profligate of the first water, and only lacked the one good trait in the common catalogue of debauched vices—open-handedness—to be a notable vagabond. But there his griping and penurious habits stepped in; and as one poison will sometimes neutralise another, when wholesome remedies would not avail, so he was restrained by a bad passion from quaffing his full measure of evil, when virtue might have sought to hold him back in vain.

By the time he had unfolded all the peddling schemes he knew upon the cards, it was growing late in the evening; and Mr. Pecksniff not making his appearance, the young ladies expressed a wish to return home. But this, Mr. Jonas, in his gallantry, would by no means allow, until they had partaken of some bread and cheese and porter; and even then he was excessively unwilling to allow them to depart; often beseeching Miss Charity to come a little closer, or to stop a little longer, and preferring many other complimentary petitions of that nature, in his own hospitable and earnest way. When all his efforts to detain them were fruitless, he put on his hat and great-coat preparatory to escorting them to Todgers's; remarking that he knew they would rather walk thither than ride; and that for his part he was quite of their opinion.

"Good night," said Anthony. "Good night; remember me to—ha, ha, ha!—to Pecksniff. Take care of your cousin, my dears; beware of Jonas; he's a dangerous fellow. Don't quarrel for him, in any case!"

"Oh, the creature!" cried Mercy. "The idea of quarrelling for *him*! You may take him, Cherry, my love, all to yourself. I make you a present of my share."

"What! I'm a sour grape, am I, cousin?" said Jonas.

Miss Charity was more entertained by this repartee than one would have supposed likely, considering its advanced age and simple character. But in her sisterly affection she took Mr. Jonas to task for leaning so very hard upon a broken reed, and said that he must not be so cruel to poor Merry any more, or she (Charity) would positively be obliged to hate him. Mercy, who really had her share of good-humour, only retorted with a laugh; and they walked home in consequence without any angry passages of words upon the way. Mr. Jonas being in the middle, and having a cousin on each arm, sometimes squeezed the wrong one; so tightly too, as to cause her not a little inconvenience; but as he talked to Charity in whispers the whole time, and paid her great attention, no doubt this was an accidental circumstance. When they arrived at Todgers's, and the door was opened, Mercy broke hastily from them, and ran upstairs; but Charity and Jonas lingered on the steps talking together for more than five minutes; so, as Mrs. Todgers observed next morning to a third party, "It was pretty clear what was going on *there*, and she was glad of it, for it really was high time Miss Pecksniff thought of settling."

And now the day was coming on, when that bright vision which had burst on Todgers's so suddenly, and made a sunshine in the shady breast of Jenkins, was to be seen no more; when it was to be packed like a brown paper parcel, or a fish-basket, or an oyster barrel, or a fat gentleman, or any other dull reality of life, in a stage-coach, and carried down into the country!

"Never, my dear Miss Pecksniffs," said Mrs. Todgers, when they retired to rest on the last night of their stay; "never have I seen an establishment so perfectly broken-hearted as mine is at this present moment of time. I don't believe the gentlemen will be the gentlemen they were, or anything like it—no, not for weeks to come. You have a great deal to answer for; both of you."

They modestly disclaimed any wilful agency in this disastrous state of things, and regretted it very much.

"Your pious Pa, too!" said Mrs. Todgers. "There's a loss! My dear Miss Pecksniffs, your Pa is a perfect missionary of peace and love."

Entertaining an uncertainty as to the particular kind of love supposed to be comprised in Mr. Pecksniff's mission, the young ladies received the compliment rather coldly.

"If I dared," said Mrs. Todgers, perceiving this, "to violate a confidence which has been

reposed in me, and to tell you why I must beg of you to leave the little door between your room and mine open to-night, I think you would be interested. But I mustn't do it, for I promised Mr. Jinkins faithfully that I would be as silent as the tomb."

"Dear Mrs. Todgers! what can you mean?"

"Why then, my sweet Miss Pecksniffs," said the lady of the house; "my own loves, if you will allow me the privilege of taking that freedom on the eve of our separation, Mr. Jinkins and the gentlemen have made up a little musical party among themselves, and *do* intend in the dead of this night to perform a serenade upon the stairs outside the door. I could have wished, I own," said Mrs. Todgers, with her usual foresight, "that it had been fixed to take place an hour or two earlier; because, when gentlemen sit up late, they drink, and when they drink, they're not so musical perhaps, as when they don't. But this is the arrangement, and I know you will be gratified, my dear Miss Pecksniffs, by such a mark of their attention."

The young ladies were at first so much excited by the news, that they vowed they couldn't think of going to bed, until the serenade was over. But half an hour of cool waiting so altered their opinion that they not only went to bed, but fell asleep; and were moreover not ecstatically charmed to be awakened some time afterwards by certain dulcet strains breaking in upon the silent watches of the night.

It was very affecting—very. Nothing more dismal could have been desired by the most fastidious taste. The gentleman of a vocal turn was head mute, or chief mourner; Jinkins took the bass; and the rest took anything they could get. The youngest gentleman blew his melancholy into a flute. He didn't blow much out of it, but that was all the better. If the two Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers had perished by spontaneous combustion, and the serenade had been in honour of their ashes, it would have been impossible to surpass the unutterable despair expressed in that one chorus, "Go where glory waits thee!" It was a requiem, a dirge, a moan, a howl, a wail, a lament; an abstract of everything that is sorrowful and hideous in sound. The flute of the youngest gentleman was wild and fitful. It came and went in gusts, like the wind. For a long time together he seemed to have left off, and when it was quite settled by Mrs. Todgers and the young ladies, that, overcome by his feelings, he had retired in tears, he unexpectedly turned up again at the very top of the tune, gasping for breath. He was a tremendous performer. There was no

knowing where to have him; and exactly when you thought he was doing nothing at all, then was he doing the very thing that ought to astonish you most.

There were several of these concerted pieces; perhaps two or three too many, though that, as Mrs. Todgers said, was a fault on the right side. But even then, even at that solemn moment, when the thrilling sounds may be presumed to have penetrated into the very depths of his nature, if he had any depths, Jinkins couldn't leave the youngest gentleman alone. He asked him distinctly, before the second song began—as a personal favour too, mark the villain in that—not to play. Yes; he said so; not to play. The breathing of the youngest gentleman was heard through the keyhole of the door. He *didn't* play. What vent was a flute for the passions swelling up within his breast? A trombone would have been a world too mild.

The serenade approached its close. Its crowning interest was at hand. The gentleman of a literary turn had written a song on the departure of the ladies, and adapted it to an old tune. They all joined, except the youngest gentleman in company, who, for the reasons aforesaid, maintained a fearful silence. The song (which was of a classical nature) invoked the oracle of Apollo, and demanded to know what would become of Todgers's when CHARITY and MERCY were banished from its walls. The oracle delivered no opinion particularly worth remembering, according to the not infrequent practice of oracles from the earliest ages down to the present time. In the absence of enlightenment on that subject, the strain deserted it, and went on to show that the Miss Pecksniffs were nearly related to Rule Britannia, and that if Great Britain hadn't been an island there could have been no Miss Pecksniffs. And being now on a nautical tack, it closed with this verse:

"All hail to the vessel of Pecksniff the sire!
And favouring breezes to fan;
While Tritons flock round it, and proudly admire
The architect, artist, and man!"

As they presented this beautiful picture to the imagination, the gentlemen gradually withdrew to bed to give the music the effect of distance; and so it died away, and Todgers's was left to its repose.

Mr. Bailey reserved his vocal offering until the morning, when he put his head into the room as the young ladies were kneeling before their trunks, packing up, and treated them to an imitation of the voice of a young dog, in trying circumstances: when that animal is sup-

posed by persons of a lively fancy, to relieve his feelings by calling for pen and ink.

"Well, young ladies," said the youth, "so you're a going home, are you; worse luck?"

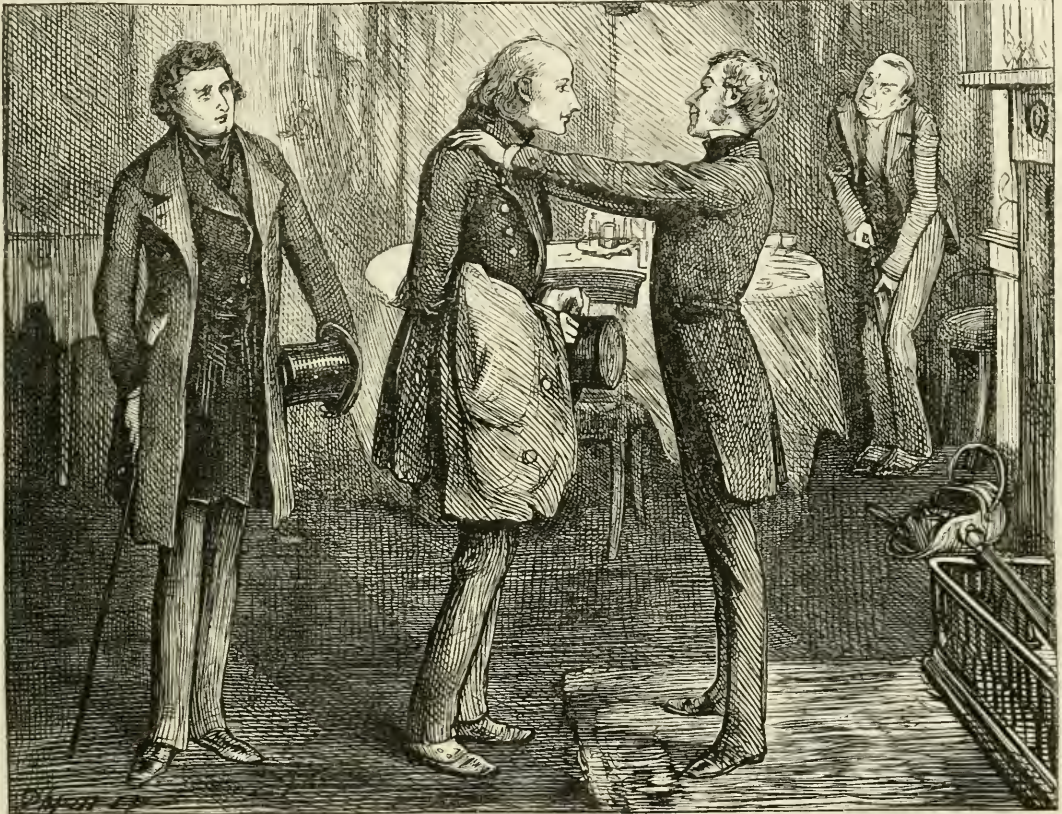
"Yes, Bailey, we're going home," returned Mercy.

"An't you a going to leave none of 'em a lock of your hair?" inquired the youth. "It's real, an't it?"

They laughed at this, and told him of course it was.

"Oh is it of course though?" said Bailey. "I know better than that. Hers an't. Why, I see it hanging up once, on that nail by the winder. Besides, I've gone behind her at dinner-time and pulled it; and she never know'd. I say young ladies—I'm a going to leave. I an't a going to stand being called names by her, no longer."

Miss Mercy inquired what his plans for the future might be; in reply to whom Mr. Bailey intimated that he thought of going, either into top-boots, or into the army.



"STAND OFF A MOMENT, TOM," CRIED THE OLD PUPIL. . . . "LET ME LOOK AT YOU!
JUST THE SAME! NOT A BIT CHANGED!"

"Into the army!" cried the young ladies, with a laugh.

"Ah!" said Bailey, "why not? There's a many drummers in the Tower. I'm acquainted with 'em. Don't their country set a valley on 'em, mind you! Not at all!"

"You'll be shot, I see," observed Mercy.

"Well," cried Mr. Bailey, "wot if I am? There's something gamey in it, young ladies, an't there? I'd sooner be hit with a cannon-ball than a rolling-pin, and she's always a catch-

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 7.

ing up something of that sort, and throwing it at me, when the gentlemen's appetites is good. Wot," said Mr. Bailey, stung by the recollections of his wrongs, "wot, if they *do* con-sume the per-vishuns. It an't *my* fault, is it?"

"Surely no one says it is," said Mercy.

"Don't they though?" retorted the youth. "No. Yes. Ah! Oh! No one mayn't say it is! but some one knows it is. But I an't a going to have every rise in prices wisited on me. I an't a going to be killed, because the markets is dear. I

won't stop. And therefore," added Mr. Bailey, relenting into a smile, "wotever you mean to give me, you'd better give me all at once, becos if ever you come back agin, I shan't be here; and as to the other boy, *he* won't deserve nothing, I know."

The young ladies, on behalf of Mr. Pecksniff and themselves, acted on this thoughtful advice; and in consideration of their private friendship, presented Mr. Bailey with a gratuity so liberal, that he could hardly do enough to show his gratitude; which found but an imperfect vent, during the remainder of the day, in divers secret slaps upon his pocket, and other such facetious pantomime. Nor was it confined to these ebullitions; for besides crushing a bandbox, with a bonnet in it, he seriously damaged Mr. Pecksniff's luggage, by ardently hauling it down from the top of the house; and in short evinced, by every means in his power, a lively sense of the favours he had received from that gentleman and his family.

Mr. Pecksniff and Mr. Jinkins came home to dinner, arm-in-arm; for the latter gentleman had made half-holiday, on purpose; and thus gaining an immense advantage over the youngest gentleman and the rest, whose time, as it perversely chanced, was all bespoke, until the evening. The bottle of wine was Mr. Pecksniff's treat, and they were very sociable indeed; though full of lamentations on the necessity of parting. While they were in the midst of their enjoyment, old Anthony and his son were announced; much to the surprise of Mr. Pecksniff, and greatly to the discomfiture of Jinkins.

"Come to say good bye, you see," said Anthony, in a low voice to Mr. Pecksniff, as they took their seats apart at the table, while the rest conversed among themselves. "Where's the use of a division between you and me? We are the two halves of a pair of scissors, when apart Pecksniff; but together we are something. Eh?"

"Unanimity, my good sir," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff, "is always delightful."

"I don't know about that," said the old man, "for there are some people I would rather differ from than agree with. But you know my opinion of you."

Mr. Pecksniff, still having "hypocrite" in his mind, only replied by a motion of his head, which was something between an affirmative bow, and a negative shake.

"Complimentary," said Anthony. "Complimentary, upon my word. It was an involuntary tribute to your abilities, even at the time; and it was not a time to suggest compliments either. But we agreed in the coach, you know, that we quite understood each other."

"Oh, quite!" assented Mr. Pecksniff, in a manner which implied that he himself was misunderstood most cruelly, but would not complain.

Anthony glanced at his son as he sat beside Miss Charity, and then at Mr. Pecksniff, and then at his son again, very many times. It happened that Mr. Pecksniff's glances took a similar direction; but when he became aware of it, he first cast down his eyes, and then closed them; as if he were determined that the old man should read nothing there.

"Jonas is a shrewd lad," said the old man.

"He appears," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff in his most candid manner, "to be very shrewd."

"And careful," said the old man.

"And careful, I have no doubt," returned Mr. Pecksniff.

"Lookye!" said Anthony in his ear. "I think he is sweet upon your daughter."

"Tut, my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, with his eyes still closed; "young people—young people—a kind of cousins, too—no more sweetness than is in that, sir."

"Why, there is very little sweetness in that, according to our experience," returned Anthony. "Isn't there a trifle more here?"

"Impossible to say," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff. "Quite impossible! You surprise me."

"Yes, I know that," said the old man, drily. "It may last; I mean the sweetness, not the surprise; and it may die off. Supposing it should last, perhaps (you having feathered your nest pretty well, and I having done the same) we might have a mutual interest in the matter."

Mr. Pecksniff, smiling gently, was about to speak, but Anthony stopped him.

"I know what you are going to say. It's quite unnecessary. You have never thought of this for a moment; and in a point so nearly affecting the happiness of your dear child, you couldn't, as a tender father, express an opinion; and so forth. Yes, quite right. And like you! But it seems to me, my dear Pecksniff," added Anthony, laying his hand upon his sleeve, "that if you and I kept up the joke of pretending not to see this, one of us might possibly be placed in a position of disadvantage; and as I am very unwilling to be that party myself, you will excuse my taking the liberty of putting the matter beyond a doubt, thus early; and having it distinctly understood, as it is now, that we do see it, and do know it. Thank you for your attention. We are now upon an equal footing; which is agreeable to us both, I am sure."

He rose as he spoke; and giving Mr. Pecksniff a nod of intelligence, moved away from him to where the young people were sitting: leaving

that good man somewhat puzzled and discomfited by such very plain dealing, and not quite free from a sense of having been foiled in the exercise of his familiar weapons.

But the night-coach had a punctual character, and it was time to join it at the office; which was so near at hand, that they had already sent their luggage, and arranged to walk. Thither the whole party repaired, therefore, after no more delay than sufficed for the equipment of the Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers. They found the coach already at its starting-place, and the horses in; there, too, were a large majority of the commercial gentlemen, including the youngest, who was visibly agitated, and in a state of deep mental dejection.

Nothing could equal the distress of Mrs. Todgers in parting from the young ladies, except the strong emotions with which she bade adieu to Mr. Pecksniff. Never surely was a pocket-handkerchief taken in and out of a flat reticule so often as Mrs. Todgers's was, as she stood upon the pavement by the coach door, supported on either side by a commercial gentleman; and by the light of the coach-lamps caught such brief snatches and glimpses of the good man's face, as the constant interposition of Mr. Jinkins allowed. For Jinkins, to the last the youngest gentleman's rock a-head in life, stood upon the coach-step talking to the ladies. Upon the other step was Mr. Jonas, who maintained that position in right of his cousinship; whereas the youngest gentleman, who had been first upon the ground, was deep in the booking-office among the black and red placards, and the portraits of fast coaches, where he was ignominiously harassed by porters, and had to contend and strive perpetually with heavy baggage. This false position, combined with his nervous excitement, brought about the very consummation and catastrophe of his miseries; for when, in the moment of parting, he aimed a flower—a hothouse flower, that had cost money—at the fair hand of Mercy, it reached, instead, the coachman on the box, who thanked him kindly, and stuck it in his button-hole.

They were off now; and Todgers's was alone again. The two young ladies, leaning back in their separate corners, resigned themselves to their own regretful thoughts. But Mr. Pecksniff, dismissing all ephemeral considerations of social pleasure and enjoyment, concentrated his meditations on the one great virtuous purpose before him, of casting out that ingrate and deceiver, whose presence yet troubled his domestic hearth, and was a sacrilege upon the altars of his household gods.

CHAPTER XII.

WILL BE SEEN IN THE LONG RUN, IF NOT IN THE SHORT ONE, TO CONCERN MR. PINCH AND OTHERS, NEARLY. MR. PECKSNIFF ASSERTS THE DIGNITY OF OUTRAGED VIRTUE. YOUNG MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT FORMS A DESPERATE RESOLUTION.

MR. PINCH and Martin, little dreaming of the stormy weather that impended, made themselves very comfortable in the Pecksniffian halls, and improved their friendship daily. Martin's facility, both of invention and execution, being remarkable, his grammar-school proceeded with great vigour; and Tom repeatedly declared, that if there were anything like certainty in human affairs, or impartiality in human judges, a design so new and full of merit could not fail to carry off the first prize when the time of competition arrived. Without being quite so sanguine himself, Martin had his hopeful anticipations too; and they served to make him brisk and eager at his task.

"If I should turn out a great architect, Tom," said the new pupil one day, as he stood at a little distance from his drawing, and eyed it with much complacency, "I'll tell you what should be one of the things I'd build."

"Aye!" cried Tom. "What?"

"Why, your fortune."

"No!" said Tom Pinch, quite as much delighted as if the thing were done. "Would you thought? How kind of you to say so."

"I'd build it up, Tom," returned Martin, "on such a strong foundation, that it should last your life—aye, and your children's lives too, and their children's after them. I'd be your patron, Tom. I'd take you under my protection. Let me see the man who should give the cold shoulder to anybody I chose to protect and patronise, if I were at the top of the tree, Tom!"

"Now, I don't think," said Mr. Pinch, "upon my word, that I was ever more gratified than by this. I really don't."

"Oh! I mean what I say," retorted Martin with a manner as free and easy in its condescension to, not to say in its compassion for, the other, as if he were already First Architect in Ordinary to all the Crowned Heads in Europe. "I'd do it—I'd provide for you."

"I am afraid," said Tom, shaking his head, "that I should be a mighty awkward person to provide for."

"Pooh, pooh!" rejoined Martin. "Never mind that. If I took it in my head to say,

'Pinch is a clever fellow; I approve of Pinch; I should like to know the man who would venture to put himself in opposition to me. Besides, confound it, Tom, you could be useful to me in a hundred ways.'

"If I were not useful in one or two it shouldn't be for want of trying," said Tom.

"For instance," pursued Martin, after a short reflection, "you'd be a capital fellow, now, to see that my ideas were properly carried out; and to overlook the works in their progress before they were sufficiently advanced to be very interesting to me; and to take all that sort of plain sailing. Then you'd be a splendid fellow to show people over my studio, and to talk about Art to 'em, when I couldn't be bored myself, and all that kind of thing. For it would be devilish creditable, Tom (I'm quite in earnest, I give you my word), to have a man of your information about one, instead of some ordinary blockhead. Oh, I'd take care of you. You'd be useful, rely upon it!"

To say that Tom had no idea of playing first fiddle in any social orchestra, but was always quite satisfied to be set down for the hundred and fiftieth violin in the band, or thereabouts, is to express his modesty in very inadequate terms. He was much delighted, therefore, by these observations.

"I should be married to her then, Tom, of course," said Martin.

What was that which checked Tom Pinch so suddenly, in the high flow of his gladness: bringing the blood into his honest cheeks, and a remorseful feeling to his honest heart, as if he were unworthy of his friend's regard?

"I should be married to her then," said Martin, looking with a smile towards the light: "and we should have, I hope, children about us. They'd be very fond of you, Tom."

But not a word said Mr. Pinch. The words he would have uttered, died upon his lips, and found a life more spiritual in self-denying thoughts.

"All the children hereabouts are fond of you, Tom, and mine would be, of course," pursued Martin. "Perhaps I might name one of them after you. Tom, eh? Well, I don't know, Tom's not a bad name. Thomas Pinch Chuzzlewit. T. P. C. on his pinafores—no objection to that, I should say?"

Tom cleared his throat, and smiled.

"She would like you, Tom, I know," said Martin.

"Aye!" cried Tom Pinch, faintly.

"I can tell exactly what she would think of you," said Martin, leaning his chin upon his

hand, and looking through the window-glass as if he read there what he said; "I know her so well. She would smile, Tom, often at first when you spoke to her, or when she looked at you—merrily too—but you wouldn't mind that. A brighter smile you never saw!"

"No, no," said Tom, "I wouldn't mind that."

"She would be as tender with you, Tom," said Martin, "as if you were a child yourself. So you are almost, in some things, an't you, Tom?"

Mr. Pinch nodded his entire assent.

"She would always be kind and good-humoured, and glad to see you," said Martin; "and when she found out exactly what sort of fellow you were (which she'd do, very soon), she would pretend to give you little commissions to execute, and to ask little services of you, which she knew you were burning to render; so that when she really pleased you most, she would try to make you think you most pleased her. She would take to you uncommonly, Tom; and would understand you far more delicately than I ever shall; and would often say, I know, that you were a harmless, gentle, well-intentioned, good fellow."

How silent Tom Pinch was!

"In honour of old times," said Martin, "and of her having heard you play the organ in this damp little church down here—for nothing too—we will have one in the house. I shall build an architectural music-room on a plan of my own, and it'll look rather knowing in a recess at one end. There you shall play away, Tom, till you tire yourself; and, as you like to do so in the dark, it shall be dark; and many's the summer evening she and I will sit and listen to you, Tom; be sure of that."

It may have required a stronger effort on Tom Pinch's part to leave the seat on which he sat, and shake his friend by both hands, with nothing but serenity and grateful feeling painted on his face; it may have required a stronger effort to perform this simple act with a pure heart, than to achieve many and many a deed to which the doubtful trumpet blown by Fame has lustily resounded. Doubtful, because from its long hovering over scenes of violence, the smoke and steam of death have clogged the keys of that brave instrument; and it is not always that its notes are either true or tuneful.

"It's a proof of the kindness of human nature," said Tom, characteristically putting himself quite out of sight in the matter, "that everybody who comes here, as you have done, is more considerate and affectionate to me than

I should have any right to hope, if I were the most sanguine creature in the world; or should have any power to express, if I were the most eloquent. It really overpowers me. But trust me," said Tom, "that I am not ungrateful—that I never forget—and that, if I can ever prove the truth of my words to you, I will."

"That's all right," observed Martin, leaning back in his chair with a hand in each pocket, and yawning drearily. "Very fine talking, Tom; but I'm at Pecksniff's, I remember, and perhaps a mile or so out of the high-road to fortune just at this minute. So you've heard again this morning from what's his name, eh?"

"Who may that be?" asked Tom, seeming to enter a mild protest on behalf of the dignity of an absent person.

"You know. What is it? Northkey."

"Westlock," rejoined Tom, in rather a louder tone than usual.

"Ah! to be sure," said Martin, "Westlock. I knew it was something connected with a point of the compass and a door. Well! and what says Westlock?"

"Oh! he has come into his property," answered Tom, nodding his head, and smiling.

"He's a lucky dog," said Martin. "I wish it were mine instead. Is that all the mystery you were to tell me?"

"No," said Tom; "not all."

"What's the rest?" asked Martin.

"For the matter of that," said Tom, "it's no mystery, and you won't think much of it; but it's very pleasant to me. John always used to say when he was here, 'Mark my words, Pinch. When my father's executors cash up'—he used strange expressions now and then, but that was his way."

"Cash-up's a very good expression," observed Martin, "when other people don't apply it to you. Well!—What a slow fellow you are, Pinch!"

"Yes, I am I know," said Tom; "but you'll make me nervous if you tell me so. I'm afraid you have put me out a little now, for I forget what I was going to say."

"When John's father's executors cashed up"—said Martin impatiently.

"Oh yes, to be sure," cried Tom; "yes. 'Then,' says John, 'I'll give you a dinner, Pinch, and come down to Salisbury on purpose.' Now, when John wrote the other day—the morning Pecksniff left, you know—he said his business was on the point of being immediately settled, and as he was to receive his money directly, when could I meet him at Salisbury? I wrote and said, any day this week; and I told

him besides, that there was a new pupil here, and what a fine fellow you were, and what friends we had become. Upon which John writes back this letter"—Tom produced it—"fixes to-morrow; sends his compliments to you; and begs that we three may have the pleasure of dining together—not at the house where you and I were, either; but at the very first hotel in the town. Read what he says."

"Very well," said Martin, glancing over it with his customary coolness; "much obliged to him. I'm agreeable."

Tom could have wished him to be a little more astonished, a little more pleased, or in some form or other a little more interested in such a great event. But he was perfectly self-possessed: and falling into his favourite solace of whistling, took another turn at the grammar-school, as if nothing at all had happened.

Mr. Pecksniff's horse being regarded in the light of a sacred animal, only to be driven by him, the chief priest of that temple, or by some person distinctly nominated for the time being to that high office by himself, the two young men agreed to walk to Salisbury; and so, when the time came, they set off on foot; which was, after all, a better mode of travelling than in the gig, as the weather was very cold and very dry.

Better! a rare strong, hearty, healthy walk—four statute miles an hour—preferable to that rumbling, tumbling, jolting, shaking, scraping, creaking, villanous old gig? Why, the two things will not admit of comparison. It is an insult to the walk, to set them side by side. Where is an instance of a gig having ever circulated a man's blood, unless when, putting him in danger of his neck, it awakened in his veins and in his ears, and all along his spine, a tingling heat, much more peculiar than agreeable? When did a gig ever sharpen anybody's wits and energies, unless it was when the horse bolted, and, crashing madly down a steep hill with a stone wall at the bottom, his desperate circumstances suggested to the only gentleman left inside, some novel and unheard-of mode of dropping out behind? Better than the gig!

The air was cold, Tom; so it was, there was no denying it; but would it have been more genial in the gig? The blacksmith's fire burned very bright, and leaped up high, as though it wanted men to warm; but would it have been less tempting, looked at from the clammy cushions of a gig? The wind blew keenly, nipping the features of the hardy wight who fought his way along; blinding him with his

own hair if he had enough of it, and wintry dust if he hadn't; stopping his breath as though he had been soused in a cold bath; tearing aside his wrappings-up, and whistling in the very marrow of his bones; but it would have done all this a hundred times more fiercely to a man in a gig, wouldn't it? A fig for gigs!

Better than the gig! When were travellers by wheels and hoofs seen with such red-hot cheeks as those? when were they so good-humouredly and merrily bloused? when did their laughter ring upon the air, as they turned them round, what time the stronger gusts came sweeping up; and, facing round again as they passed by, dashed on, in such a glow of ruddy health as nothing could keep pace with, but the high spirits it engendered? Better than the gig! Why, here *is* a man in a gig coming the same way now. Look at him as he passes the whip into his left hand, chafes his numbed right fingers on his granite leg, and beats those marble toes of his upon the foot-board. Ha, ha, ha! Who would exchange this rapid hurry of the blood for yonder stagnant misery, though its pace were twenty miles for one?

Better than the gig! No man in a gig could have such interest in the milestones. No man in a gig could see, or feel, or think, like merry users of their legs. How, as the wind sweeps on, upon these breezy downs, it tracks its flight in darkening ripples on the grass, and smoothest shadows on the hills! Look round and round upon this bare bleak plain, and see even here, upon a winter's day, how beautiful the shadows are! Alas! it is the nature of their kind to be so. The loveliest things in life, Tom, are but shadows; and they come and go, and change and fade away, as rapidly as these!

Another mile, and then begins a fall of snow, making the crow, who skims away so close above the ground to shirk the wind, a blot of ink upon the landscape. But though it drives and drifts against them as they walk, stiffening on their skirts, and freezing in the lashes of their eyes, they wouldn't have it fall more sparingly, no, not so much as by a single flake, although they had to go a score of miles. And, lo! the towers of the Old Cathedral rise before them, even now! and by and bye they come into the sheltered streets, made strangely silent by their white carpet; and so to the Inn for which they are bound; where they present such flushed and burning faces to the cold waiter, and are so brimful of vigour, that he almost feels assaulted by their presence; and, having nothing to oppose to the attack (being fresh, or rather

stale, from the blazing fire in the coffee-room), is quite put out of his pale countenance.

A famous Inn! the hall a very grove of dead game, and dangling joints of mutton; and in one corner an illustrious larder, with glass doors, developing cold fowls and noble joints, and tarts wherein the raspberry jam coyly withdrew itself, as such a precious creature should, behind a lattice-work of pastry. And behold, on the first floor, at the court-end of the house, in a room with all the window-curtains drawn, a fire piled half-way up the chimney, plates warming before it, wax candles gleaming everywhere, and a table spread for three, with silver and glass enough for thirty—John Westlock: not the old John of Pecksniff's, but a proper gentleman: looking another and a grander person, with the consciousness of being his own master and having money in the bank: and yet in some respects the old John too, for he seized Tom Pinch by both his hands the instant he appeared, and fairly hugged him, in his cordial welcome.

"And this," said John, "is Mr. Chuzzlewit. I am very glad to see him!"—John had an off-hand manner of his own; so they shook hands warmly, and were friends in no time.

"Stand off a moment, Tom," cried the old pupil, laying one hand on each of Mr. Pinch's shoulders, and holding him out at arm's length. "Let me look at you! Just the same! Not a bit changed!"

"Why, it's not so very long ago, you know," said Tom Pinch, "after all."

"It seems an age to me," cried John; "and so it ought to seem to you, you dog." And then he pushed Tom down into the easiest chair, and clapped him on the back so heartily, and so like his old self in their old bedroom at old Pecksniff's, that it was a toss-up with Tom Pinch whether he should laugh or cry. Laughter won it; and they all three laughed together.

"I have ordered everything for dinner, that we used to say we'd have, Tom," observed John Westlock.

"No!" said Tom Pinch. "Have you?"

"Everything. Don't laugh, if you can help it, before the waiters. I couldn't when I was ordering it. It's like a dream."

John was wrong there, because nobody ever dreamed such soup as was put upon the table directly afterwards; or such fish; or such side-dishes; or such a top and bottom; or such a course of birds and sweets; or in short anything approaching the reality of that entertainment at ten-and-sixpence a head, exclusive of wines. As to *them*, the man who can dream such iced

champagne, such claret, port, or sherry, had better go to bed and stop there.

But perhaps the finest feature of the banquet was, that nobody was half so much amazed by everything as John himself, who, in his high delight, was constantly bursting into fits of laughter, and then endeavouring to appear preternaturally solemn, lest the waiters should conceive he wasn't used to it. Some of the things they brought him to carve were such outrageous practical jokes, though, that it was impossible to stand it; and when Tom Pinch insisted, in spite of the deferential advice of an attendant, not only on breaking down the outer wall of a raised pie with a tablespoon, but on trying to eat it afterwards, John lost all dignity, and sat behind the gorgeous dish-cover at the head of the table, roaring to that extent that he was audible in the kitchen. Nor had he the least objection to laugh at himself, as he demonstrated when they had all three gathered round the fire, and the dessert was on the table; at which period, the head waiter inquired with respectful solicitude whether that port, being a light and tawny wine, was suited to his taste, or whether he would wish to try a fruity port with greater body. To this John gravely answered, that he was well satisfied with what he had, which he esteemed, as one might say, a pretty tidy vintage; for which the waiter thanked him and withdrew. And then John told his friends, with a broad grin, that he supposed it was all right, but he didn't know; and went off into a perfect shout.

They were very merry and full of enjoyment the whole time, but not the least pleasant part of the festival was, when they all three sat about the fire, cracking nuts, drinking wine, and talking cheerfully. It happened that Tom Pinch had a word to say to his friend the organist's assistant, and so deserted his warm corner for a few minutes at this season, lest it should grow too late; leaving the other two young men together.

They drank his health in his absence, of course; and John Westlock took that opportunity of saying, that he had never had even a peevish word with Tom during the whole term of their residence in Mr. Pecksniff's house. This naturally led him to dwell on Tom's character, and to hint that Mr. Pecksniff understood it pretty well. He only hinted this, and very distantly: knowing that it pained Tom Pinch to have that gentleman disparaged, and thinking it would be as well to leave the new pupil to his own discoveries.

"Yes," said Martin. "It's impossible to like

Pinch better than I do, or to do greater justice to his good qualities. He's the most willing fellow I ever saw."

"He's rather too willing," observed John, who was quick in observation. "It's quite a fault in him."

"So it is," said Martin. "Very true. There was a fellow only a week or so ago—a Mr. Tigg—who borrowed all the money he had, on a promise to repay it in a few days. It was but half a sovereign, to be sure; but it's well it was no more, for he'll never see it again."

"Poor fellow!" said John, who had been very attentive, to these few words. "Perhaps you have not had an opportunity of observing that, in his own pecuniary transactions, Tom's proud."

"You don't say so! No, I haven't. What do you mean? Won't he borrow?"

John Westlock shook his head.

"That's very odd," said Martin, setting down his empty glass. "He's a strange compound, to be sure."

"As to receiving money as a gift," resumed John Westlock; "I think he'd die first."

"He's made up of simplicity," said Martin. "Help yourself."

"You, however," pursued John, filling his own glass, and looking at his companion with some curiosity, "who are older than the majority of Mr. Pecksniff's assistants, and have evidently had much more experience, understand him, I have no doubt, and see how liable he is to be imposed upon."

"Certainly," said Martin, stretching out his legs, and holding his wine between his eye and the light, "Mr. Pecksniff knows that too. So do his daughters. Eh?"

John Westlock smiled, but made no answer.

"By the bye," said Martin, "that reminds me. What's your opinion of Pecksniff? How did he use you? What do you think of him now?—Coolly, you know, when it's all over?"

"Ask Pinch," returned the old pupil. "He knows what my sentiments used to be upon the subject. They are not changed, I assure you."

"No, no," said Martin, "I'd rather have them from you."

"But Pinch says they are unjust," urged John with a smile.

"Oh! well! Then I know what course they take beforehand," said Martin; "and, therefore, you can have no delicacy in speaking plainly. Don't mind me, I beg. I don't like him, I tell you frankly. I am with him because it happens from particular circumstances to suit my convenience. I have some ability, I believe, in that

way; and the obligation, if any, will most likely be on his side and not mine. At the lowest mark, the balance will be even, and there'll be no obligation at all. So you may talk to *me*, as if I had no connexion with him."

"If you press me to give my opinion"—returned John Westlock.

"Yes, I do," said Martin. "You'll oblige me."

"I should say," resumed the other, "that he is the most consummate scoundrel on the face of the earth."

"Oh!" said Martin, as coolly as ever. "That's rather strong."

"Not stronger than he deserves," said John; "and if he called upon me to express my opinion of him to his face, I would do so in the very same terms, without the least qualification. His treatment of Pinch is in itself enough to justify them; but when I look back upon the five years I passed in that house, and remember the hypocrisy, the knavery, the meannesses, the false pretences, the lip service of that fellow, and his trading in saintly semblances for the very worst realities; when I remember how often I was the witness of all this, and how often I was made a kind of party to it, by the fact of being there, with him for my teacher; I swear to you, that I almost despise myself."

Martin drained his glass, and looked at the fire.

"I don't mean to say, that is a right feeling," pursued John Westlock, "because it was no fault of mine; and I can quite understand—you, for instance, fully appreciating him, and yet being forced by circumstances to remain there. I tell you simply what my feeling is; and even now, when, as you say, it's all over; and when I have the satisfaction of knowing that he always hated me, and we always quarrelled, and I always told him my mind; even now, I feel sorry that I didn't yield to an impulse I often had, as a boy, of running away from him and going abroad."

"Why abroad?" asked Martin, turning his eyes upon the speaker.

"In search," replied John Westlock, shrugging his shoulders, "of the livelihood I couldn't have earned at home. There would have been something spirited in that. But come—fill your glass and let us forget him."

"As soon as you please," said Martin. "In reference to myself and my connexion with him, I have only to repeat what I said before. I have taken my own way with him so far, and shall continue to do so, even more than ever; for the fact is—to tell you the truth—that I believe he looks to me to supply his defects, and couldn't afford to lose me. I had a notion of that in first going there. Your health!"

"Thank you," returned young Westlock. "Yours. And may the new pupil turn out as well as you can desire!"

"What new pupil?"

"The fortunate youth born under an auspicious star," returned John Westlock, laughing; "whose parents, or guardians, are destined to be hooked by the advertisement. What! don't you know that he has advertised again?"

"No."

"Oh, yes. I read it just before dinner in the old newspaper. I know it to be his; having some reason to remember the style. Hush! Here's Pinch. Strange, is it not, that the more he likes Pecksniff (if he can like him better than he does), the greater reason one has to like *him*? Not a word more, or we shall spoil his whole enjoyment."

Tom entered as the words were spoken, with a radiant smile upon his face; and rubbing his hands, more from a sense of delight than because he was cold (for he had been running fast), sat down in his warm corner again, and was as happy as—as only Tom Pinch could be. There is no other simile that will express his state of mind.

"And so," he said, when he had gazed at his friend for some time in silent pleasure, "so you really are a gentleman at last, John. Well, to be sure!"

"Trying to be, Tom; trying to be," he rejoined good-humouredly. "There is no saying what I may turn out, in time."

"I suppose you wouldn't carry your own box to the mail now," said Tom Pinch, smiling: "although you lost it altogether by not taking it."

"Wouldn't I?" retorted John. "That's all you know about it, Pinch. It must be a very heavy box that I wouldn't carry to get away from Pecksniff's, Tom."

"There!" cried Pinch, turning to Martin, "I told you so. The great fault in his character, is his injustice to Pecksniff. You mustn't mind a word he says on that subject. His prejudice is most extraordinary."

"The absence of anything like prejudice on Tom's part, you know," said John Westlock, laughing heartily, as he laid his hand on Mr. Pinch's shoulder, "is perfectly wonderful. If one man ever had a profound knowledge of another, and saw him in a true light, and in his own proper colours, Tom has that knowledge of Mr. Pecksniff."

"Why, of course I have," cried Tom. "That's exactly what I have so often said to you. If you knew him as well as I do—

John, I'd give almost any money to bring that about—you'd admire, respect, and reverence him. You couldn't help it. Oh, how you wounded his feelings when you went away!"

"If I had known whereabouts his feelings lay," retorted young Westlock, "I'd have done my best, Tom, with that end in view, you may depend upon it. But as I couldn't wound him in what he has not, and in what he knows nothing of, except in his ability to probe them to the quick in other people, I am afraid I can lay no claim to your compliment."

Mr. Pinch, being unwilling to protract a discussion which might possibly corrupt Martin, forbore to say anything in reply to this speech; but John Westlock, whom nothing short of an iron gag would have silenced when Mr. Pecksniff's merits were once in question, continued notwithstanding.

"His feelings! Oh, he's a tender-hearted man. His feelings! Oh, he's a considerate, conscientious, self-examining, moral vagabond, he is! His feelings! Oh!—what's the matter, Tom?"



"I'M GOING UP," OBSERVED THE DRIVER; "HOUNSLOW, TEN MILES THIS SIDE LONDON."

Mr. Pinch was by this time erect upon the hearth-rug, buttoning his coat with great energy.

"I can't bear it," said Tom, shaking his head. "No. I really cannot. You must excuse me, John. I have a great esteem and friendship for you; I love you very much; and have been perfectly charmed and overjoyed to-day to find you just the same as ever: but I cannot listen to this."

"Why, it's my old way, Tom; and you say yourself that you are glad to find me unchanged."

"Not in this respect," said Tom Pinch. "You must excuse me, John. I cannot, really; I will not. It's very wrong; you should be more guarded in your expressions. It was bad enough when you and I used to be alone together, but under existing circumstances, I can't endure it, really. No. I cannot, indeed."

"You are quite right!" exclaimed the other, exchanging looks with Martin; "and I am quite wrong, Tom. I don't know how the deuce we fell on this unlucky theme. I beg your pardon with all my heart."

"You have a free and manly temper, I

know," said Pinch; "and therefore, your being so ungenerous in this one solitary instance, only grieves me the more. It's not my pardon you have to ask, John. You have done *me* nothing but kindnesses."

"Well! Pecksniff's pardon, then," said young Westlock. "Anything, Tom, or anybody. Pecksniff's pardon—will that do? Here! let us drink Pecksniff's health!"

"Thank you," cried Tom, shaking hands with him eagerly and filling a bumper. "Thank you; I'll drink it with all my heart, John. Mr. Pecksniff's health, and prosperity to him!"

John Westlock echoed the sentiment, or nearly so; for he drank Mr. Pecksniff's health, and something to him—but what, was not quite audible. The general unanimity being then completely restored, they drew their chairs closer round the fire, and conversed in perfect harmony and enjoyment until bed-time.

No slight circumstance, perhaps, could have better illustrated the difference of character between John Westlock and Martin Chuzzlewit, than the manner in which each of the young men contemplated Tom Pinch, after the little rupture just described. There was a certain amount of jocularly in the looks of both, no doubt, but there all resemblance ceased. The old pupil could not do enough to show Tom how cordially he felt towards him, and his friendly regard seemed of a graver and more thoughtful kind than before. The new one, on the other hand, had no impulse but to laugh at the recollection of Tom's extreme absurdity; and mingled with his amusement there was something slighting and contemptuous, indicative as it appeared, of his opinion that Mr. Pinch was much too far gone in simplicity, to be admitted as the friend, on serious and equal terms, of any rational man.

John Westlock, who did nothing by halves, if he could help it, had provided beds for his two guests in the hotel; and after a very happy evening, they retired. Mr. Pinch was sitting on the side of his bed with his cravat and shoes off, ruminating on the manifold good qualities of his old friend, when he was interrupted by a knock at his chamber door, and the voice of John himself.

"You're not asleep yet, are you, Tom?"

"Bless you, no! not I. I was thinking of you," replied Tom, opening the door. "Come in."

"I am not going to detain you," said John; "but I have forgotten all the evening a little commission I took upon myself; and I am afraid I may forget it again, if I fail to discharge

it at once. You know a Mr. Tigg, Tom, I believe?"

"Tigg!" cried Tom. "Tigg! The gentleman who borrowed some money of me?"

"Exactly," said John Westlock. "He begged me to present his compliments, and to return it with many thanks. Here it is. I suppose it's a good one, but he is rather a doubtful kind of customer, Tom."

Mr. Pinch received the little piece of gold, with a face whose brightness might have shamed the metal; and said he had no fear about that. He was glad, he added, to find Mr. Tigg so prompt and honourable in his dealings; very glad.

"Why, to tell you the truth, Tom," replied his friend, "he is not always so. If you'll take my advice, you'll avoid him as much as you can, in the event of your encountering him again. And by no means, Tom—pray bear this in mind, for I am very serious—by no means lend him money any more."

"Aye, aye!" said Tom, with his eyes wide open.

"He is very far from being a reputable acquaintance," returned young Westlock; "and the more you let him know you think so, the better for you, Tom."

"I say, John," quoth Mr. Pinch, as his countenance fell, and he shook his head in a dejected manner, "I hope you are not getting into bad company."

"No, no," he replied, laughing. "Don't be uneasy on that score."

"Oh but I *am* uneasy," said Tom Pinch; "I can't help it, when I hear you talking in that way. If Mr. Tigg is what you describe him to be, you have no business to know him, John. You may laugh, but I don't consider it by any means a laughing matter, I assure you."

"No, no," returned his friend, composing his features. "Quite right. It is not, certainly."

"You know, John," said Mr. Pinch, "your very good nature and kindness of heart make you thoughtless; and you can't be too careful on such a point as this. Upon my word, if I thought you were falling among bad companions, I should be quite wretched, for I know how difficult you would find it to shake them off. I would much rather have lost this money, John, than I would have had it back again on such terms."

"I tell you, my dear good old fellow," cried his friend, shaking him to and fro with both hands, and smiling at him with a cheerful, open countenance, that would have carried conviction to a mind much more suspicious than Tom's; "I tell you there is no danger."

"Well!" cried Tom, "I am glad to hear it; I am overjoyed to hear it. I am sure there is not, when you say so in that manner. You won't take it ill, John, that I said what I did just now!"

"Ill!" said the other, giving his hand a hearty squeeze; "why what do you think I am made of? Mr. Tigg and I are not on such an intimate footing that you need be at all uneasy; I give you my solemn assurance of that, Tom. You are quite comfortable now?"

"Quite," said Tom.

"Then once more, good night!"

"Good night!" cried Tom; "and such pleasant dreams to you, as should attend the sleep of the best fellow in the world!"

"—Except Pecksniff," said his friend, stopping at the door for a moment, and looking gaily back.

"Except Pecksniff," answered Tom, with great gravity; "of course."

And thus they parted for the night; John Westlock full of light-heartedness and good humour; and poor Tom Pinch quite satisfied, though still, as he turned over on his side in bed, he muttered to himself, "I really do wish, for all that, though, that he wasn't acquainted with Mr. Tigg!"

They breakfasted together very early next morning, for the two young men desired to get back again in good season; and John Westlock was to return to London by the coach that day. As he had some hours to spare, he bore them company for three or four miles on their walk, and only parted from them at last in sheer necessity. The parting was an unusually hearty one, not only as between him and Tom Pinch, but on the side of Martin also, who had found in the old pupil a very different sort of person from the milksop he had prepared himself to expect.

Young Westlock stopped upon a rising ground, when he had gone a little distance, and looked back. They were walking at a brisk pace, and Tom appeared to be talking earnestly. Martin had taken off his great-coat, the wind being now behind them, and carried it upon his arm. As he looked, he saw Tom relieve him of it, after a faint resistance, and, throwing it upon his own, encumber himself with the weight of both. This trivial incident impressed the old pupil mightily, for he stood there, gazing after them, until they were hidden from his view; when he shook his head, as if he were troubled by some uneasy reflection, and thoughtfully retraced his steps to Salisbury.

In the mean time, Martin and Tom pursued

their way, until they halted, safe and sound, at Mr. Pecksniff's house, where a brief epistle from that good gentleman to Mr. Pinch, announced the family's return by that night's coach. As it would pass the corner of the lane at about six o'clock in the morning, Mr. Pecksniff requested that the gig might be in waiting at the finger-post about that time, together with a cart for the luggage. And to the end that he might be received with the greater honour, the young men agreed to rise early, and be upon the spot themselves.

It was the least cheerful day they had yet passed together. Martin was out of spirits and out of humour, and took every opportunity of comparing his condition and prospects with those of young Westlock: much to his own disadvantage always. This mood of his depressed Tom: and neither that morning's parting, nor yesterday's dinner, helped to mend the matter. So the hours dragged on heavily enough; and they were glad to go to bed early.

They were not quite so glad to get up again at half-past four o'clock, in all the shivering discomfort of a dark winter's morning; but they turned out punctually, and were at the finger-post full half-an-hour before the appointed time. It was not by any means a lively morning, for the sky was black and cloudy, and it rained hard; but Martin said there was some satisfaction in seeing that brute of a horse (by this, he meant Mr. Pecksniff's Arab steed) getting very wet; and that he rejoiced, on his account, that it rained so fast. From this it may be inferred, that Martin's spirits had not improved, as indeed they had not; for while he and Mr. Pinch stood waiting under a hedge, looking at the rain, the gig, the cart, and its reeking driver, he did nothing but grumble; and, but that it is indispensable to any dispute that there should be two parties to it, he would certainly have picked a quarrel with Tom.

At length the noise of wheels was faintly audible in the distance, and presently the coach came splashing through the mud and mire, with one miserable outside passenger crouching down among wet straw, under a saturated umbrella; and the coachman, guard, and horses, in a fellowship of dripping wretchedness. Immediately on its stopping, Mr. Pecksniff let down the window-glass and hailed Tom Pinch.

"Dear me, Mr. Pinch! is it possible that you are out upon this very inclement morning?"

"Yes, sir," cried Tom, advancing eagerly, "Mr. Chuzzlewit and I, sir—"

"Oh!" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking, not so much at Martin as at the spot on which he

stood. "Oh! Indeed! Do me the favour to see to the trunks, if you please, Mr. Pinch."

Then, Mr. Pecksniff descended, and helped his daughters to alight; but neither he nor the young ladies took the slightest notice of Martin, who had advanced to offer his assistance, but was repulsed by Mr. Pecksniff's standing immediately before his person, with his back towards him. In the same manner, and in profound silence, Mr. Pecksniff handed his daughters into the gig; and following himself and taking the reins, drove off home.

Lost in astonishment, Martin stood staring at the coach, and when the coach had driven away, at Mr. Pinch and the luggage, until the cart moved off too; when he said to Tom:

"Now will you have the goodness to tell me what *this* portends?"

"What?" asked Tom.

"This fellow's behaviour—Mr. Pecksniff's I mean. You saw it?"

"No. Indeed I did not," cried Tom. "I was busy with the trunks."

"It is no matter," said Martin. "Come! Let us make haste back." And without another word he started off at such a pace, that Tom had some difficulty in keeping up with him.

He had no care where he went, but walked through little heaps of mud and little pools of water with the utmost indifference; looking straight before him, and sometimes laughing in a strange manner within himself. Tom felt that anything he could say would only render him the more obstinate, and therefore trusted to Mr. Pecksniff's manner when they reached the house, to remove the mistaken impression under which he felt convinced so great a favourite as the new pupil must unquestionably be labouring. But he was not a little amazed himself, when they did reach it, and entered the parlour where Mr. Pecksniff was sitting alone before the fire, drinking some hot tea, to find, that instead of taking favourable notice of his relative, and keeping him, Mr. Pinch, in the background, he did exactly the reverse, and was so lavish in his attentions to Tom, that Tom was thoroughly confounded.

"Take some tea, Mr. Pinch—take some tea," said Pecksniff, stirring the fire. "You must be very cold and damp. Pray take some tea, and come into a warm place, Mr. Pinch."

Tom saw that Martin looked at Mr. Pecksniff as though he could have easily found it in his heart to give *him* an invitation to a very warm place; but he was quite silent, and standing opposite that gentleman at the table, regarded him attentively.

"Take a chair, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "Take a chair, if you please. How have things gone on in our absence, Mr. Pinch?"

"You—you will be very much pleased with the grammar-school, sir," said Tom. "It's nearly finished."

"If you will have the goodness, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, waving his hand and smiling, "we will not discuss anything connected with that question at present. What have *you* been doing, Thomas, humph?"

Mr. Pinch looked from master to pupil, and from pupil to master, and was so perplexed and dismayed, that he wanted presence of mind to answer the question. In this awkward interval, Mr. Pecksniff (who was perfectly conscious of Martin's gaze, though he had never once glanced towards him) poked the fire very much, and when he couldn't do that any more, drank tea assiduously.

"Now, Mr. Pecksniff," said Martin at last, in a very quiet voice, "if you have sufficiently refreshed and recovered yourself, I shall be glad to hear what you mean by this treatment of me."

"And what," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning his eyes on Tom Pinch, even more placidly and gently than before, "what have *you* been doing, Thomas, humph?"

When he had repeated this inquiry, he looked round the walls of the room as if he were curious to see whether any nails had been left there by accident in former times.

Tom was almost at his wit's end what to say between the two, and had already made a gesture as if he would call Mr. Pecksniff's attention to the gentleman who had last addressed him, when Martin saved him further trouble, by doing so himself.

"Mr. Pecksniff," he said, softly rapping the table twice or thrice, and moving a step or two nearer, so that he could have touched him with his hand; "you heard what I said just now. Do me the favour to reply, if you please. I ask you"—he raised his voice a little here—"what you mean by this?"

"I will talk to you, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff in a severe voice, as he looked at him for the first time, "presently."

"You are very obliging," returned Martin; "presently will not do. I must trouble you to talk to me at once."

Mr. Pecksniff made a feint of being deeply interested in his pocket-book, but it shook in his hands; he trembled so.

"Now," retorted Martin, rapping the table again. "Now. Presently will not do. Now!"

"Do you threaten me, sir?" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

Martin looked at him, and made no answer; but a curious observer might have detected an ominous twitching at his mouth, and perhaps an involuntary attraction of his right hand in the direction of Mr. Pecksniff's cravat.

"I lament to be obliged to say, sir," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, "that it would be quite in keeping with your character if you did threaten me. You have deceived me. You have imposed upon a nature which you knew to be confiding and unsuspecting. You have obtained admission, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, rising, "to this house, on perverted statements, and on false pretences."

"Go on," said Martin, with a scornful smile. "I understand you now. What more?"

"Thus much more, sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, trembling from head to foot, and trying to rub his hands, as though he were only cold. "Thus much more, if you force me to publish your shame before a third party, which I was unwilling and indisposed to do. This lowly roof, sir, must not be contaminated by the presence of one, who has deceived, and cruelly deceived, an honourable, beloved, venerated, and venerable gentleman; and who wisely suppressed that deceit from me when he sought my protection and favour, knowing that, humble as I am, I am an honest man, seeking to do my duty in this carnal universe, and setting my face against all vice and treachery. I weep for your depravity, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff; "I mourn over your corruption, I pity your voluntary withdrawal of yourself from the flowery paths of purity and peace;" here he struck himself upon his breast, or moral garden; "but I cannot have a leper and a serpent for an inmate. Go forth," said Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand: "go forth, young man! Like all who know you, I renounce you!"

With what intention Martin made a stride forward at these words, it is impossible to say. It is enough to know that Tom Pinch caught him in his arms, and that, at the same moment, Mr. Pecksniff stepped back so hastily, that he missed his footing, tumbled over a chair, and fell in a sitting posture on the ground; where he remained without an effort to get up again, with his head in a corner: perhaps considering it the safest place.

"Let me go, Pinch!" cried Martin, shaking him away. "Why do you hold me? Do you think a blow could make him a more abject creature than he is? Do you think that if I spat upon him, I could degrade him to a lower

level than his own? Look at him. Look at him, Pinch!"

Mr. Pinch involuntarily did so. Mr. Pecksniff sitting, as has been already mentioned, on the carpet, with his head in an acute angle of the wainscot, and all the damage and detriment of an uncomfortable journey about him, was not exactly a model of all that is prepossessing and dignified in man, certainly. Still he *was* Pecksniff; it was impossible to deprive him of that unique and paramount appeal to Tom. And he returned Tom's glance, as if he would have said, "Aye, Mr. Pinch, look at me! Here I am! You know what the Poet says about an honest man: and an honest man is one of the few great works that can be seen for nothing! Look at me!"

"I tell you," said Martin, "that as he lies there, disgraced, bought, used; a cloth for dirty hands, a mat for dirty feet, a lying, fawning, servile hound, he is the very last and worst among the vermin of the world. And mark me, Pinch! The day will come—he knows it: see it written on his face, while I speak!—when even you will find him out, and will know him as I do, and as he knows I do. *He renounce me!* Cast your eyes on the Renouncer, Pinch, and be the wiser for the recollection!"

He pointed at him as he spoke with unutterable contempt, and flinging his hat upon his head, walked from the room and from the house. He went so rapidly that he was already clear of the village, when he heard Tom Pinch calling breathlessly after him in the distance.

"Well! what now?" he said, when Tom came up.

"Dear, dear!" cried Tom, "are you going?"

"Going!" he echoed. "Going!"

"I didn't so much mean that, as were you going now at once—in this bad weather—on foot—without your clothes—with no money?" cried Tom.

"Yes," he answered sternly, "I am."

"And where?" cried Tom. "Oh where will you go?"

"I don't know," he said. "Yes I do. I'll go to America!"

"No, no," cried Tom, in a kind of agony. "Don't go there. Pray don't! Think better of it. Don't be so dreadfully regardless of yourself. Don't go to America!"

"My mind is made up," he said. "Your friend was right. I'll go to America. God bless you, Pinch!"

"Take this!" cried Tom, pressing a book upon him in great agitation. "I must make haste back, and can't say anything I would.

Heaven be with you. Look at the leaf I have turned down. Good bye! good bye!"

The simple fellow wrung him by the hand, with tears stealing down his cheeks; and they parted hurriedly upon their separate ways.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHOWING WHAT BECAME OF MARTIN AND HIS DESPERATE RESOLVE, AFTER HE LEFT MR. PECKSNIFF'S HOUSE; WHAT PERSONS HE ENCOUNTERED; WHAT ANXIETIES HE SUFFERED; AND WHAT NEWS HE HEARD.

CARRYING Tom Pinch's book quite unconsciously under his arm, and not even buttoning his coat as a protection against the heavy rain, Martin went doggedly forward at the same quick pace, until he had passed the finger-post, and was on the high-road to London. He slackened very little in his speed even then, but he began to think, and look about him, and to disengage his senses from the coil of angry passions which hitherto had held them prisoner.

It must be confessed that, at that moment, he had no very agreeable employment either for his moral or his physical perceptions. The day was dawning from a patch of watery light in the east, and sullen clouds came driving up before it, from which the rain descended in a thick, wet mist. It streamed from every twig and bramble in the hedge; made little gullies in the path; ran down a hundred channels in the road; and punched innumerable holes into the face of every pond and gutter. It fell with an oozy, slushy sound among the grass; and made a muddy kennel of every furrow in the ploughed fields. No living creature was anywhere to be seen. The prospect could hardly have been more desolate if animated nature had been dissolved in water, and poured down upon the earth again in that form.

The range of view within the solitary traveller, was quite as cheerless as the scene without. Friendless and penniless; incensed to the last degree; deeply wounded in his pride and self-love; full of independent schemes, and perfectly destitute of any means of realizing them; his most vindictive enemy might have been satisfied with the extent of his troubles. To add to his other miseries, he was by this time sensible of being wet to the skin, and cold at his very heart.

In this deplorable condition, he remembered Mr. Pinch's book; more because it was rather

troublesome to carry, than from any hope of being comforted by that parting gift. He looked at the dingy lettering on the back, and finding it to be an odd volume of the "Bachelor of Salamanca," in the French tongue, cursed Tom Pinch's folly, twenty times. He was on the point of throwing it away, in his ill-humour and vexation, when he bethought himself that Tom had referred him to a leaf, turned down; and opening it, at that place, that he might have additional cause of complaint against him for supposing that any cold scrap of the Bachelor's wisdom could cheer him in such circumstances, found—

Well, well! not much, but Tom's all. The half-sovereign. He had wrapped it hastily in a piece of paper, and pinned it to the leaf. These words were scrawled in pencil on the inside: "I don't want it, indeed. I should not know what to do with it if I had it."

There are some falsehoods, Tom, on which men mount, as on bright wings, towards Heaven. There are some truths, cold, bitter, taunting truths, wherein your worldly scholars are very apt and punctual, which bind men down to earth with leaden chains. Who would not rather have to fan him, in his dying hour, the lightest feather of a falsehood such as thine, than all the quills that have been plucked from the sharp porcupine, reproachful truth, since time began!

Martin felt keenly for himself, and he felt this good deed of Tom's keenly. After a few minutes it had the effect of raising his spirits, and reminding him that he was not altogether destitute, as he had left a fair stock of clothes behind him, and wore a gold hunting-watch in his pocket. He found a curious gratification, too, in thinking what a winning fellow he must be to have made such an impression on Tom; and in reflecting how superior he was to Tom; and how much more likely to make his way in the world. Animated by these thoughts, and strengthened in his design of endeavouring to push his fortune in another country, he resolved to get to London as a rallying-point, in the best way he could; and to lose no time about it.

He was ten good miles from the village made illustrious by being the abiding-place of Mr. Pecksniff, when he stopped to breakfast at a little road-side alehouse; and resting upon a high-backed settle before the fire, pulled off his coat, and hung it before the cheerful blaze, to dry. It was a very different place from the last tavern in which he had regaled: boasting no greater extent of accommodation than the brick-floored kitchen yielded; but the mind so soon accommodates itself to the necessities of the

body, that this poor waggoners' house-of-call, which he would have despised yesterday, became now quite a choice hotel; while his dish of eggs and bacon, and his mug of beer, were not by any means the coarse fare he had supposed, but fully bore out the inscription on the window-shutter, which proclaimed those viands to be "Good entertainment for travellers."

He pushed away his empty plate: and with a second mug upon the hearth before him, looked thoughtfully at the fire until his eyes ached. Then he looked at the highly-coloured scripture pieces on the walls, in little black frames like common shaving-glasses, and saw how the Wise Men (with a strong family likeness among them) worshipped in a pink manger; and how the Prodigal Son came home in red rags to a purple father, and already feasted his imagination on a sea-green calf. Then he glanced through the window at the falling rain, coming down aslant upon the sign-post over against the house, and overflowing the horse-trough; and then he looked at the fire again, and seemed to descry a doubly-distant London, retreating among the fragments of the burning wood.

He had repeated this process in just the same order, many times, as if it were a matter of necessity, when the sound of wheels called his attention to the window, out of its regular turn; and there he beheld a kind of light van drawn by four horses, and laden, as well as he could see (for it was covered in), with corn and straw. The driver, who was alone, stopped at the door to water his team, and presently came stamping and shaking the wet off his hat and coat, into the room where Martin sat.

He was a red-faced burly young fellow; smart in his way, and with a good-humoured countenance. As he advanced towards the fire, he touched his shining forehead with the forefinger of his stiff leather glove, by way of salutation; and said (rather unnecessarily) that it was an uncommon wet day.

"Very wet," said Martin.

"I don't know as ever I see a wetter."

"I never felt one," said Martin.

The driver glanced at Martin's soiled dress, and his damp shirt-sleeves, and his coat hung up to dry; and said, after a pause, as he warmed his hands:

"You have been caught in it, sir?"

"Yes," was the short reply.

"Out riding, maybe?" said the driver.

"I should have been, if I owned a horse; but I don't," returned Martin.

"That's bad," said the driver.

"And may be worse," said Martin.

Now, the driver said "That's bad," not so much because Martin didn't own a horse, as because he said he didn't with all the reckless desperation of his mood and circumstances, and so left a great deal to be inferred. Martin put his hands in his pockets and whistled, when he had retorted on the driver: thus giving him to understand that he didn't care a pin for Fortune; that he was above pretending to be her favourite when he was not; and that he snapped his fingers at her, the driver, and everybody else.

The driver looked at him stealthily for a minute or so; and in the pauses of his warming, whistled too. At length he asked, as he pointed his thumb towards the road,

"Up or down?"

"Which *is* up?" said Martin.

"London of course," said the driver.

"Up then," said Martin. He tossed his head in a careless manner afterwards, as if he would have added, "Now you know all about it;" put his hands deeper into his pockets; changed his tune, and whistled a little louder.

"I'm going up," observed the driver; "Hounslow, ten miles this side London."

"Are you?" cried Martin, stopping short and looking at him.

The driver sprinkled the fire with his wet hat until it hissed again, and answered, "Ay; to be sure he was."

"Why, then," said Martin, "I'll be plain with you. You may suppose from my dress that I have money to spare. I have not. All I can afford for coach-hire is a crown, for I have but two. If you can take me for that, and my waistcoat, or this silk handkerchief, do. If you can't, leave it alone."

"Short and sweet," remarked the driver.

"You want more?" said Martin. "Then I haven't got more, and I can't get it, so there's an end of that." Whereupon he began to whistle again.

"I didn't say I wanted more, did I?" asked the driver, with something like indignation.

"You didn't say my offer was enough," rejoined Martin.

"Why how could I, when you wouldn't let me? In regard to the waistcoat, I wouldn't have a man's waistcoat, much less a gentleman's waistcoat, on my mind, for no consideration; but the silk handkerchief's another thing; and if you was satisfied when we got to Hounslow, I shouldn't object to that as a gift."

"Is it a bargain, then?" said Martin.

"Yes, it is," returned the other.

"Then finish this beer," said Martin, handing

him the mug, and pulling on his coat with great alacrity; "and let us be off as soon as you like."

In two minutes more he had paid his bill, which amounted to a shilling; was lying at full length on a truss of straw, high and dry at the top of the van, with the tilt a little open in front for the convenience of talking to his new friend; and was moving along in the right direction with a most satisfactory and encouraging briskness.

The driver's name, as he soon informed Martin, was William Simmons, better known as Bill; and his spruce appearance was sufficiently explained by his connexion with a large stage-coaching establishment at Hounslow, whither he was conveying his load from a farm belonging to the concern in Wiltshire. He was frequently up and down the road on such errands, he said, and to look after the sick and rest horses, of which animals he had much to relate that occupied a long time in the telling. He aspired to the dignity of the regular box, and expected an appointment on the first vacancy. He was musical besides, and had a little key-bugle in his pocket, on which, whenever the conversation flagged, he played the first part of a great many tunes, and regularly broke down in the second.

"Ah!" said Bill, with a sigh, as he drew the back of his hand across his lips, and put this instrument in his pocket, after screwing off the mouth-piece to drain it; "Lummy Ned of the Light Salisbury, *he* was the one for musical talents. He *was* a guard. What you may call a Guard'an Angel, was Ned."

"Is he dead?" asked Martin.

"Dead!" replied the other, with a contemptuous emphasis. "Not he. You won't catch Ned a dying easy. No, no. He knows better than that."

"You spoke of him in the past tense," observed Martin, "so I supposed he was no more."

"He's no more in England," said Bill, "if that's what you mean. He went to the U-nited States."

"Did he?" asked Martin, with sudden interest. "When?"

"Five year ago, or thenabout," said Bill. "He had set up in the public line here, and couldn't meet his engagements, so he cut off to Liverpool one day without saying anything about it, and went and shipped himself for the U-nited States."

"Well?" said Martin.

"Well! as he landed there without a penny

to bless himself with, of course they was very glad to see him in the U-nited States."

"What do you mean?" asked Martin, with some scorn.

"What do I mean?" said Bill. "Why, *that*. All men are alike in the U-nited States, an't they? It makes no odds whether a man has a thousand pound, or nothing, there—particular in New York, I'm told, where Ned landed."

"New York, was it?" asked Martin, thoughtfully.

"Yes," said Bill. "New York. I know that, because he sent word home that it brought Old York to his mind, quite vivid, in consequence of being so exactly unlike it in every respect. I don't understand wot particular business Ned turned his mind to, when he got there; but he wrote home that him and his friends was always a singing, Ale Columbia, and blowing up the President, so I suppose it was something in the public line, or free-and-easy way, again. Any how, he made his fortune."

"No!" cried Martin.

"Yes he did," said Bill. "I know that, because he lost it all, the day after, in six-and-twenty banks as broke. He settled a lot of the notes on his father, when it was ascertained that they was really stopped, and sent 'em over with a dutiful letter. I know that, because they was shown down our yard for the old gentleman's benefit, that he might treat himself with tobacco in the workus."

"He was a foolish fellow not to take care of his money when he had it," said Martin indignantly.

"There you're right," said Bill, "especially as it was all in paper, and he might have took care of it so very easy, by folding it up in a small parcel."

Martin said nothing in reply, but soon afterwards fell asleep, and remained so for an hour or more. When he awoke, finding it had ceased to rain, he took his seat beside the driver, and asked him several questions,—as how long had the fortunate guard of the Light Salisbury been in crossing the Atlantic; at what time of the year had he sailed; what was the name of the ship in which he made the voyage; how much had he paid for passage-money; did he suffer greatly from sea-sickness? and so forth. But on these points of detail, his friend was possessed of little or no information; either answering obviously at random, or acknowledging that he had never heard, or had forgotten; nor, although he returned to the charge very often, could he obtain any useful intelligence on these essential particulars.

They joggled on all day, and stopped so often—now to refresh, now to change their team of horses, now to exchange or bring away a set of harness, now on one point of business, and now upon another, connected with the coaching on that line of road—that it was midnight when they reached Hounslow. A little short of the stables for which the van was bound, Martin got down, paid his crown, and forced his silk handkerchief upon his honest friend, notwithstanding the many protestations that he didn't wish to

deprive him of it, with which he tried to give the lie to his longing looks. That done, they parted company; and when the van had driven into its own yard and the gates were closed, Martin stood in the dark street, with a pretty strong sense of being shut out, alone, upon the dreary world, without the key of it.

But in this moment of despondency, and often afterwards, the recollection of Mr. Pecksniff operated as a cordial to him; awakening in his breast an indignation that was very wholesome



“STUCK HIS HANDS IN HIS SKIRT-POCKETS AND SWAGGERED ROUND THE CORNER.”

in nerving him to obstinate endurance. Under the influence of this fiery dram, he started off for London without more ado. Arriving there in the middle of the night, and not knowing where to find a tavern open, he was fain to stroll about the streets and market-places until morning.

He found himself, about an hour before dawn, in the humbler regions of the Adelphi; and addressing himself to a man in a fur-cap who was taking down the shutters of an obscure public-

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 8.

house, informed him that he was a stranger, and inquired if he could have a bed there. It happened, by good luck, that he could. Though none of the gaudiest, it was tolerably clean, and Martin felt very glad and grateful when he crept into it, for warmth, rest, and forgetfulness.

It was quite late in the afternoon when he awoke; and by the time he had washed and dressed, and broken his fast, it was growing dusk again. This was all the better, for it was now a matter of absolute necessity that he should

part with his watch to some obliging pawn-broker. He would have waited until after dark for this purpose, though it had been the longest day in the year, and he had begun it without a breakfast.

He passed more Golden Balls than all the jugglers in Europe have juggled with, in the course of their united performances, before he could determine in favour of any particular shop where those symbols were displayed. In the end, he came back to one of the first he had seen, and entering by a side-door in a court, where the three balls, with the legend "Money Lent," were repeated in a ghastly transparency, passed into one of a series of little closets, or private boxes, erected for the accommodation of the more bashful and uninitiated customers. He bolted himself in; pulled out his watch; and laid it on the counter.

"Upon my life and soul!" said a low voice in the next box to the shopman who was in treaty with him, "you must make it more; you must make it a trifle more, you must indeed! You must dispense with one half-quarter of an ounce in weighing out your pound of flesh, my best of friends, and make it two-and-six."

Martin drew back involuntarily, for he knew the voice at once.

"You're always full of your chaff," said the shopman, rolling up the article (which looked like a shirt) quite as a matter of course, and nibbling his pen upon the counter.

"I shall never be full of my wheat," said Mr. Tigg, "as long as I come here. Ha, ha! Not bad! Make it two-and-six, my dear friend, positively for this occasion only. Half-a-crown is a delightful coin. Two-and-six! Going at two-and-six! For the last time, at two-and-six!"

"It'll never be the last time till it's quite worn out," rejoined the shopman. "It's grown yellow in the service as it is."

"It's master has grown yellow in the service, if you mean that, my friend," said Mr. Tigg; "in the patriotic service of an ungrateful country. You are making it two-and-six, I think?"

"I'm making it," returned the shopman, "what it always has been—two shillings. Same name as usual, I suppose?"

"Still the same name," said Mr. Tigg; "my claim to the dormant peerage not being yet established by the House of Lords."

"The old address?"

"Not at all," said Mr. Tigg; "I have removed my town establishment from thirty-eight, Mayfair, to number fifteen-hundred-and-forty-two, Park-lane."

"Come, I'm not going to put down that, you know," said the shopman, with a grin.

"You may put down what you please, my friend," quoth Mr. Tigg. "The fact is still the same. The apartments for the under-butler and the fifth footman being of a most confounded low and vulgar kind at thirty-eight, Mayfair, I have been compelled, in my regard for the feelings which do them so much honour, to take on lease, for seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, renewable at the option of the tenant, the elegant and commodious family mansion, number fifteen-hundred-and-forty-two, Park-lane. Make it two-and-six, and come and see me!"

The shopman was so highly entertained by this piece of humour, that Mr. Tigg himself could not repress some little show of exultation. It vented itself, in part, in a desire to see how the occupant of the next box received his pleasantry; to ascertain which, he glanced round the partition, and immediately, by the gaslight, recognised Martin.

"I wish I may die," said Mr. Tigg, stretching out his body so far that his head was as much in Martin's little cell as Martin's own head was, "but this is one of the most tremendous meetings in Ancient or Modern History! How are you? What is the news from the agricultural districts? How are our friends the P.'s? Ha, ha! David, pay particular attention to this gentleman, immediately, as a friend of mine, I beg."

"Here! Please to give me the most you can for this," said Martin, handing the watch to the shopman, "I want money sorely."

"He wants money sorely!" cried Mr. Tigg with excessive sympathy. "David, you will have the goodness to do your very utmost for my friend, who wants money sorely. You will deal with my friend as if he were myself. A gold hunting-watch, David, engine-turned, capped and jewelled in four holes, escape movement, horizontal lever, and warranted to perform correctly, upon my personal reputation, who have observed it narrowly for many years, under the most trying circumstances—" here he winked at Martin, that he might understand this recommendation would have an immense effect upon the shopman: "what do you say, David, to my friend? Be very particular to deserve my custom and recommendation, David."

"I can lend you three pounds on this, if you like," said the shopman to Martin, confidentially. "It's very old-fashioned. I couldn't say more."

"And devilish handsome too," cried Mr. Tigg. "Two-twelve-six for the watch, and seven-and-six for personal regard. I am gratified: it may be weakness, but I am. Three pounds will do. We take it. The name of my friend is Smivey: Chicken Smivey, of Holborn, twenty-six-and-a-

half B: lodger." Here he winked at Martin again, to apprise him that all the forms and ceremonies prescribed by law were now complied with, and nothing remained but the receipt of the money.

In point of fact, this proved to be the case, for Martin, who had no resource but to take what was offered him, signified his acquiescence by a nod of his head, and presently came out with the cash in his pocket. He was joined in the entry by Mr. Tigg, who warmly congratulated him, as he took his arm and accompanied him into the street, on the successful issue of the negotiation.

"As for my part in the same," said Mr. Tigg, "don't mention it. Don't compliment me, for I can't bear it!"

"I have no such intention, I assure you," retorted Martin, releasing his arm, and stopping.

"You oblige me very much," said Mr. Tigg. "Thank you."

"Now, sir," observed Martin, biting his lip, "this is a large town, and we can easily find different ways in it. If you will show me which is your way, I will take another."

Mr. Tigg was about to speak, but Martin interposed:

"I need scarcely tell you, after what you have just seen, that I have nothing to bestow upon your friend, Mr. Slyme. And it is quite as unnecessary for me to tell you that I don't desire the honour of your company."

"Stop!" cried Mr. Tigg, holding out his hand. "Hold! There is a most remarkably long-headed, flowing-bearded, and patriarchal proverb, which observes that it is the duty of a man to be just before he is generous. Be just now, and you can be generous presently. Do not confuse me with the man Slyme. Do not distinguish the man Slyme as a friend of mine, for he is no such thing. I have been compelled, sir, to abandon the party whom you call Slyme. I have no knowledge of the party whom you call Slyme. I am, sir," said Mr. Tigg, striking himself upon the breast, "a premium tulip, of a very different growth and cultivation from the cabbage Slyme, sir."

"It matters very little to me," said Martin coolly, "whether you have set up as a vagabond on your own account, or are still trading on behalf of Mr. Slyme. I wish to hold no correspondence with you. In the devil's name, man," said Martin, scarcely able despite his vexation to repress a smile, as Mr. Tigg stood leaning his back against the shutters of a shop window adjusting his hair with great composure, "will you go one way or other?"

"You will allow me to remind you, sir," said Mr. Tigg, with sudden dignity, "that you—

not I—that you—I say emphatically, *you*—have reduced the proceedings of this evening to a cold and distant matter of business, when I was disposed to place them on a friendly footing. It being made a matter of business, sir, I beg to say that I expect a trifle (which I shall bestow in Charity) as commission upon the pecuniary advance, in which I have rendered you my humble services. After the terms in which you have addressed me, sir," concluded Mr. Tigg, "you will not insult me, if you please, by offering more than half-a-crown."

Martin drew that piece of money from his pocket, and tossed it towards him. Mr. Tigg caught it, looked at it to assure himself of its goodness, spun it in the air after the manner of a pieman, and buttoned it up. Finally, he raised his hat an inch or two from his head, with a military air, and, after pausing a moment with deep gravity, as to decide in which direction he should go, and to what Earl or Marquis among his friends he should give the preference in his next call, stuck his hands in his skirt-pockets and swaggered round the corner. Martin took the directly opposite course; and so, to his great content, they parted company.

It was with a bitter sense of humiliation that he cursed, again and again, the mischance of having encountered this man in the pawnbroker's shop. The only comfort he had in the recollection was, Mr. Tigg's voluntary avowal of a separation between himself and Slyme, that would at least prevent his circumstances (so Martin argued) from being known to any member of his family, the bare possibility of which filled him with shame and wounded pride. Abstractedly, there was greater reason, perhaps, for supposing any declaration of Mr. Tigg's to be false, than for attaching the least credence to it; but remembering the terms on which the intimacy between that gentleman and his bosom friend had subsisted, and the strong probability of Mr. Tigg's having established an independent business of his own on Mr. Slyme's connexion, it had a reasonable appearance of probability: at all events, Martin hoped so; and that went a long way.

His first step, now that he had a supply of ready money for his present necessities, was, to retain his bed at the public-house until further notice, and to write a formal note to Tom Pinch (for he knew Pecksniff would see it) requesting to have his clothes forwarded to London by coach, with a direction to be left at the office until called for. These measures taken, he passed the interval before the box arrived—three days—in making inquiries relative to American

vessels, at the offices of various shipping-agents in the City; and in lingering about the docks and wharves, with the faint hope of stumbling upon some engagement for the voyage, as clerk or supercargo, or custodian of something or somebody, which would enable him to procure a free passage. But, finding, soon, that no such means of employment were likely to present themselves, and dreading the consequences of delay, he drew up a short advertisement, stating what he wanted, and inserted it in the leading newspapers. Pending the receipt of the twenty or thirty answers which he vaguely expected, he reduced his wardrobe to the narrowest limits consistent with decent respectability, and carried the overplus at different times to the pawnbroker's shop, for conversion into money.

And it was strange, very strange, even to himself, to find, how by quick though almost imperceptible degrees he lost his delicacy and self-respect, and gradually came to do that as a matter of course without the least compunction, which but a few short days before had galled him to the quick. The first time he visited the pawnbroker's, he felt on his way there as if every person whom he passed suspected whither he was going; and on his way back again, as if the whole human tide he stemmed, knew well where he had come from. When did he care to think of their discernment now! In his first wanderings up and down the weary streets, he counterfeited the walk of one who had an object in his view; but, soon there came upon him the sauntering, slipshod gait of listless idleness, and the lounging at street corners, and plucking and biting of stray bits of straw, and strolling up and down the same place, and looking into the same shop-windows, with a miserable indifference, fifty times a day. At first, he came out from his lodging with an uneasy sense of being observed—even by those chance passers-by, on whom he had never looked before, and hundreds to one would never see again—issuing in the morning from a public-house; but now, in his comings-out and goings-in he did not mind to lounge about the door, or to stand sunning himself in careless thought beside the wooden stem, studded from head to heel with pegs, on which the beer-pots dangled like so many boughs upon a pewter-tree. And yet it took but five weeks to reach the lowest round of this tall ladder!

Oh, moralists, who treat of happiness and self-respect, innate in every sphere of life, and shedding light on every grain of dust in God's highway, so smooth below your carriage-wheels, so rough beneath the tread of naked feet,—bethink yourselves in looking on the swift

descent of men who *have* lived in their own esteem, that there are scores of thousands breathing now, and breathing thick with painful toil, who in that high respect have never lived at all, nor had a chance of life! Go ye, who rest so placidly upon the sacred Bard who had been young, and when he strung his harp was old, and had never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread; go, Teachers of content and honest pride, into the mine, the mill, the forge, the squalid depths of deepest ignorance, and uttermost abyss of man's neglect, and say can any hopeful plant spring up in air so foul that it extinguishes the soul's bright torch as fast as it is kindle!! And, oh! ye Pharisees of the nineteen hundredth year of Christian Knowledge, who soundingly appeal to human nature, see that it be human first. Take heed that it has not been transformed, during your slumber and the sleep of generations, into the nature of the Beasts!

Five weeks! Of all the twenty or thirty answers, not one had come. His money—even the additional stock he had raised from the disposal of his spare clothes (and that was not much, for clothes, though dear to buy, are cheap to pawn)—was fast diminishing. Yet what could he do? At times an agony came over him in which he darted forth again, though he was but newly home, and, returning to some place where he had been already twenty times, made some new attempt to gain his end, but always unsuccessfully. He was years and years too old for a cabin-boy, and years upon years too inexperienced to be accepted as a common seaman. His dress and manner, too, militated fatally against any such proposal as the latter; and yet he was reduced to making it; for, even if he could have contemplated the being set down in America, totally without money, he had not enough left now for a steerage passage and the poorest provisions upon the voyage.

It is an illustration of a very common tendency in the mind of man, that all this time he never once doubted, one may almost say the certainty of doing great things in the New World, if he could only get there. In proportion as he became more and more dejected by his present circumstances, and the means of gaining America receded from his grasp, the more he fretted himself with the conviction that that was the only place in which he could hope to achieve any high end, and worried his brain with the thought that men going there in the meanwhile might anticipate him in the attainment of those objects which were dearest to his heart. He often thought of John Westlock, and besides

looking out for him on all occasions, actually walked about London for three days together, for the express purpose of meeting with him. But, although he failed in this; and although he would not have scrupled to borrow money of him; and although he believed that John would have lent it; yet still he could not bring his mind to write to Pinch and inquire where he was to be found. For although, as we have seen, he was fond of Tom after his own fashion, he could not endure the thought (feeling so superior to Tom) of making him the stepping-stone to his fortune, or being anything to him but a patron; and his pride so revolted from the idea, that it restrained him, even now.

It might have yielded, however; and no doubt must have yielded soon, but for a very strange and unlooked-for occurrence.

The five weeks had quite run out, and he was in a truly desperate plight, when one evening, having just returned to his lodging, and being in the act of lighting his candle at the gas jet in the bar before stalking moodily up-stairs to his own room, his landlord called him by his name. Now, as he had never told it to the man, but had scrupulously kept it to himself, he was not a little startled by this; and so plainly showed his agitation, that the landlord, to reassure him, said "it was only a letter."

"A letter!" cried Martin.

"For Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit," said the landlord, reading the superscription of one he held in his hand. "Noon. Chief Office. Paid."

Martin took it from him, thanked him, and walked up-stairs. It was not sealed, but pasted close; the hand-writing was quite unknown to him. He opened it, and found enclosed, without any name, address, or other inscription or explanation of any kind whatever, a Bank of England note for Twenty Pounds.

To say that he was perfectly stunned with astonishment and delight; that he looked again and again at the note and the wrapper; that he hurried below stairs to make quite certain that the note was a good note; and then hurried up again to satisfy himself for the fiftieth time that he had not overlooked some scrap of writing on the wrapper; that he exhausted and bewildered himself with conjectures; and could make nothing of it but that there the note was, and he was suddenly enriched; would be only to relate so many matters of course, to no purpose. The final upshot of the business at that time was, that he resolved to treat himself to a comfortable but frugal meal, in his own chamber; and having ordered a fire to be kindled, went out to purchase it forthwith.

He bought some cold beef, and ham, and French bread, and butter, and came back with his pockets pretty heavily laden. It was somewhat of a dampening circumstance to find the room full of smoke, which was attributable to two causes: firstly, to the flue being naturally vicious and a smoker; and secondly, to their having forgotten, in lighting the fire, an odd sack or two and some other trifles, which had been put up the chimney to keep the rain out. They had already remedied this oversight, however; and propped up the window-sash with a bundle of firewood to keep it open; so that, except in being rather inflammatory to the eyes and choking to the lungs, the apartment was quite comfortable.

Martin was in no vein to quarrel with it, if it had been in less tolerable order, especially when a gleaming pint of porter was set upon the table, and the servant-girl withdrew, bearing with her particular instructions relative to the production of something hot, when he should ring the bell. The cold meat being wrapped in a play-bill, Martin laid the cloth by spreading that document on the little round table with the print downwards; and arranging the collation upon it. The foot of the bed, which was very close to the fire, answered for a sideboard; and when he had completed these preparations, he squeezed an old arm-chair into the warmest corner, and sat down to enjoy himself.

He had begun to eat with great appetite, glancing round the room meanwhile with a triumphant anticipation of quitting it for ever on the morrow, when his attention was arrested by a stealthy footstep on the stairs, and presently by a knock at his chamber door, which, although it was a gentle knock enough, communicated such a start to the bundle of firewood that it instantly leaped out of window, and plunged into the street.

"More coals, I suppose," said Martin. "Come in!"

"It an't a liberty, sir, though it seems so," rejoined a man's voice. "Your servant, sir. Hope you're pretty well, sir."

Martin stared at the face that was bowing in the doorway: perfectly remembering the features and expression, but quite forgetting to whom they belonged.

"Tapley, sir," said his visitor. "Him as formerly lived at the Dragon, sir, and was forced to leave in consequence of a want of jollity, sir."

"To be sure!" cried Martin. "Why, how did you come here?"

"Right through the passage, and up the stairs, sir," said Mark.

"How did you find me out, I mean?" asked Martin.

"Why, sir," said Mark, "I've passed you once or twice in the street if I'm not mistaken; and when I was a looking in at the beef-and-ham shop just now, along with a hungry sweep, as was very much calculated to make a man jolly, sir—I see you a buying that."

Martin reddened as he pointed to the table, and said, somewhat hastily:

"Well! what then?"

"Why then, sir," said Mark, "I made bold to foller; and as I told 'em down-stairs that you expected me, I was let up."

"Are you charged with any message, that you told them you were expected?" inquired Martin.

"No, sir, I an't," said Mark. "That was what you may call a pious fraud, sir, that was."

Martin cast an angry look at him: but there was something in the fellow's merry face, and in his manner—which with all its cheerfulness was far from being obtrusive or familiar—that quite disarmed him. He had lived a solitary life too, for many weeks, and the voice was pleasant in his ear.

"Tapley," he said, "I'll deal openly with you. From all I can judge, and from all I have heard of you through Pinch, you are not a likely kind of fellow to have been brought here by impertinent curiosity or any other offensive motive. Sit down. I'm glad to see you."

"Thankee, sir," said Mark. "I'd as lieve stand."

"If you don't sit down," retorted Martin, "I'll not talk to you."

"Very good, sir," observed Mark. "Your will's a law, sir. Down it is;" and he sat down accordingly, upon the bedstead.

"Help yourself," said Martin, handing him the only knife.

"Thankee, sir," rejoined Mark. "After you've done."

"If you don't take it now, you'll not have any," said Martin.

"Very good, sir," rejoined Mark. "That being your desire—now it is." With which reply he gravely helped himself, and went on eating. Martin having done the like for a short time in silence, said abruptly:

"What are you doing in London?"

"Nothing at all, sir," rejoined Mark.

"How's that?" asked Martin.

"I want a place," said Mark.

"I'm sorry for you," said Martin.

"—To attend upon a single gentleman," resumed Mark. "If from the country the more

desirable. Makeshifts would be preferred. Wages no object."

He said this so pointedly, that Martin stopped in his eating, and said:

"If you mean me—"

"Yes, I do, sir," interposed Mark.

"Then you may judge from my style of living here, of my means of keeping a man-servant. Besides, I am going to America immediately."

"Well, sir," returned Mark, quite unmoved by this intelligence, "from all that ever I heard about it, I should say America is a very likely sort of place for me to be jolly in!"

Again Martin looked at him angrily; and again his anger melted away in spite of himself.

"Lord bless you, sir," said Mark, "what *is* the use of us a going round and round, and hiding behind the corner, and dodging up and down, when we can come straight to the point in six words? I've had my eye upon you any time this fortnight. I see well enough that there's a screw loose in your affairs. I know'd well enough the first time I see you down at the Dragon that it must be so, sooner or later. Now, sir, here am I, without a situation; without any want of wages for a year to come: for I saved up (I didn't mean to do it, but I couldn't help it) at the Dragon—here am I with a liking for what's wentersome, and a liking for you, and a wish to come out strong under circumstances as would keep other men down: and will you take me, or will you leave me?"

"How can I take you?" cried Martin.

"When I say take," rejoined Mark, "I mean will you let me go? and when I say will you let me go, I mean will you let me go along with you? for go I will, somehow or another. Now that you've said America, I see clear at once, that that's the place for me to be jolly in. Therefore, if I don't pay my own passage in the ship you go in, sir, I'll pay my own passage in another. And mark my words, if I go alone it shall be, to carry out the principle, in the rottenest, craziest, leakingest tub of a wessel that a place can be got in for love or money. So if I'm lost upon the way, sir, there'll be a drowned man at your door—and always a knocking double knocks at it, too, or never trust me!"

"This is mere folly," said Martin.

"Very good, sir," returned Mark. "I'm glad to hear it, because if you don't mean to let me go, you'll be more comfortable, perhaps, on account of thinking so. Therefore I contradict no gentleman. But all I say is, that if I don't emigrate to America in that case, in the beastliest old cockleshell as goes out of port, I'm—"

"You don't mean what you say, I'm sure," said Martin.

"Yes I do," cried Mark.

"I tell you I know better," rejoined Martin.

"Very good, sir," said Mark, with the same air of perfect satisfaction. "Let it stand that way at present, sir, and wait and see how it turns out. Why, love my heart alive! the only doubt I have, is, whether there's any credit in going with a gentleman like you, that's as certain to make his way there as a gimlet is to go through soft deal."

This was touching Martin on his weak point, and having him at a great advantage. He could not help thinking, either, what a brisk fellow this Mark was, and how great a change he had wrought in the atmosphere of the dismal little room already.

"Why, certainly, Mark," he said, "I have hopes of doing well there, or I shouldn't go. I may have the qualifications for doing well, perhaps."

"Of course you have, sir," returned Mark Tapley. "Everybody knows that."

"You see," said Martin, leaning his chin upon his hand, and looking at the fire, "ornamental architecture applied to domestic purposes, can hardly fail to be in great request in that country; for men are constantly changing their residences there, and moving further off; and it's clear they must have houses to live in."

"I should say, sir," observed Mark, "that that's a state of things as opens one of the jolliest look-outs for domestic architecture that ever I heard tell on."

Martin glanced at him hastily, not feeling quite free from a suspicion that this remark implied a doubt of the successful issue of his plans. But Mr. Tapley was eating the boiled beef and bread with such entire good faith and singleness of purpose expressed in his visage, that he could not but be satisfied. Another doubt arose in his mind, however, as this one disappeared. He produced the blank cover in which the note had been enclosed, and fixing his eyes on Mark as he put it in his hands, said,

"Now tell me the truth. Do you know anything about that?"

Mark turned it over and over: held it near his eyes; held it away from him at arm's length; held it with the superscription upwards, and with the superscription downwards; and shook his head with such a genuine expression of astonishment at being asked the question, that Martin said, as he took it from him again:

"No, I see you don't. How should you?"

Though, indeed, your knowing about it would not be more extraordinary than its being here. Come, Tapley," he added, after a moment's thought, "I'll trust you with my history, such as it is, and then you'll see, more clearly, what sort of fortunes you would link yourself to, if you followed me."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mark; "but afore you enter upon it, will you take me if I choose to go? Will you turn off me—Mark Tapley—formerly of the Blue Deagon, as can be well recommended by Mr. Pinch, and as wants a gentleman of your strength of mind to look up to; or will you, in climbing the ladder as you're certain to get to the top of, take me along with you at a respectful distance? Now, sir," said Mark, "it's of very little importance to you, I know—there's the difficulty; but it's of very great importance to me; and will you be so good as to consider of it?"

If this were meant as a second appeal to Martin's weak side, founded on his observation of the effect of the first, Mr. Tapley was a skillful and shrewd observer. Whether an intentional or an accidental shot, it hit the mark full; for Martin, relenting more and more, said with a condescension which was inexpressibly delicious to him, after his recent humiliation:

"We'll see about it, Tapley. You shall tell me in what disposition you find yourself to-morrow."

"Then, sir," said Mark, rubbing his hands, "the job's done. Go on, sir, if you please. I'm all attention."

Throwing himself back in his arm-chair, and looking at the fire, with now and then a glance at Mark, who at such times nodded his head sagely, to express his profound interest and attention; Martin ran over the chief points in his history, to the same effect as he had related them, weeks before, to Mr. Pinch. But he adapted them, according to the best of his judgment, to Mr. Tapley's comprehension; and with that view made as light of his love affair as he could, and referred to it in very few words. But here he reckoned without his host; for Mark's interest was keenest in this part of the business, and prompted him to ask sundry questions in relation to it; for which he apologised as one in some measure privileged to do so, from having seen (as Martin explained to him) the young lady at the Blue Dragon.

"And a young lady as any gentleman ought to feel more proud of being in love with," said Mark, energetically, "don't draw breath."

"Aye! You saw her when she was not happy," said Martin, gazing at the fire again.

"If you had seen her in the old times, indeed—"

"Why, she certainly was a little down-hearted, sir, and something paler in her colour than I could have wished," said Mark, "but none the worse in her looks for that. I think she seemed better, sir, after she came to London."

Martin withdrew his eyes from the fire; stared at Mark as if he thought he had suddenly gone mad; and asked him what he meant.

"No offence intended, sir," urged Mark. "I don't mean to say she was any the happier without you; but I thought she was a looking better, sir."

"Do you mean to tell me she has been in London?" asked Martin, rising hurriedly, and pushing back his chair.

"Of course I do," said Mark, rising too, in great amazement, from the bedstead.

"Do you mean to tell me she's in London now?"

"Most likely, sir. I mean to say she was, a week ago."

"And you know where?"

"Yes!" cried Mark. "What! Don't you?"

"My good fellow!" exclaimed Martin, clutching him by both arms, "I have never seen her since I left my grandfather's house."

"Why then!" cried Mark, giving the little table such a blow with his clenched fist that the slices of beef and ham danced upon it, while all his features seemed, with delight, to be going up into his forehead, and never coming back again any more, "if I an't your nat'ral born servant, hired by Fate, there an't such a thing in natur' as a Blue Dragon. What! when I was a rambling up and down a old church-yard in the City, getting myself into a jolly state, didn't I see your grandfather a toddling to and fro for pretty nigh a mortal hour! Didn't I watch him into Codgers's commercial boarding-house, and watch him out, and watch him home to his hotel, and go and tell him as his was the service for my money, and I had said so, afore I left the Dragon! Wasn't the young lady a sitting with him then, and didn't she fall a laughing in a manner as was beautiful to see! Didn't your grandfather say, 'Come back again next week,' and didn't I go next week; and didn't he say that he couldn't make up his mind to trust nobody no more, and therefore wouldn't engage me; but at the same time stood something to drink as was handsome! Why," cried Mr. Tapley, with a comical mixture of delight and chagrin, "where's the credit of a man's being jolly under such circumstances! who could help it, when things come about like this!"

For some moments, Martin stood gazing at him, as if he really doubted the evidence of his senses, and could not believe that Mark stood there, in the body before him. At length he asked him whether, if the young lady were still in London, he thought he could contrive to deliver a letter to her secretly.

"Do I think I can!" cried Mark. "*Think* I can! Here, sit down, sir. Write it out, sir!"

With that he cleared the table by the summary process of tilting everything upon it into the fire-place; snatched some writing materials from the mantel-shelf; set Martin's chair before them; forced him down into it; dipped a pen into the ink; and put it in his hand.

"Cut away, sir!" cried Mark. "Make it strong, sir. Let it be very panted, sir. Do I think so? *I* should think so. Go to work, sir!"

Martin required no further adjuration, but went to work at a great rate; while Mr. Tapley, installing himself without any more formalities into the functions of his valet and general attendant, divested himself of his coat, and went on to clear the fire-place and arrange the room: talking to himself in a low voice the whole time.

"Jolly sort of lodgings," said Mark, rubbing his nose with the knob at the end of the fire-shovel, and looking round the poor chamber: "that's a comfort. The rain's come through the roof too. That an't bad. A lively old bedstead, I'll be bound; popilated by lots of wampires, no doubt. Come! my spirits is a getting up again. An uncommon ragged night-cap this. A very good sign. We shall do yet! Here Jane, my dear," calling down the stairs, "bring up that there hot tumbler for my master, as was a mixing when I come in. That's right, sir," to Martin. "Go at it as if you meant it, sir. Be very tender, sir, if you please. You can't make it too strong, sir!"

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH MARTIN BIDS ADIEU TO THE LADY OF HIS LOVE; AND HONOURS AN OBSCURE INDIVIDUAL WHOSE FORTUNE HE INTENDS TO MAKE, BY COMMENDING HER TO HIS PROTECTION.

THE letter being duly signed, sealed, and delivered, was handed to Mark Tapley, for immediate conveyance if possible. And he succeeded so well in his embassy as to be enabled to return that same night, just as the house was closing; with the welcome intelligence that he had sent it up-stairs to the young lady, enclosed in a small manu-

script of his own, purporting to contain his further petition to be engaged in Mr. Chuzzlewit's service; and that she had herself come down and told him, in great haste and agitation, that she would meet the gentleman at eight o'clock to-morrow morning in St. James's Park. It was then agreed between the new master and the new man, that Mark should be in waiting near the hotel in good time, to escort the young lady to the place of appointment; and when they had parted for the night with this understanding, Martin took up his pen again; and

before he went to bed wrote another letter, whereof more will be seen presently.

He was up before day-break, and came upon the Park with the morning, which was clad with the least engaging of the three hundred and sixty-five dresses in the wardrobe of the year. It was raw, damp, dark, and dismal; the clouds were as muddy as the ground; and the short perspective of every street and avenue, was closed up by the mist as by a filthy curtain.

"Fine weather indeed," Martin bitterly soliloquised, "to be wandering up and down here in,



"SEEING THAT THERE WAS NO ONE NEAR, AND THAT MARK WAS STILL INTENT UPON THE FOG, HE NOT ONLY LOOKED AT HER LIPS, BUT KISSED THEM INTO THE BARGAIN."

like a thief! Fine weather indeed, for a meeting of lovers in the open air, and in a public walk! I need be departing, with all speed, for another country for I have come to a pretty pass in this!"

He might perhaps have gone on to reflect that of all mornings in the year, it was not the best calculated for a young lady's coming forth on such an errand, either. But he was stopped on the road to this reflection, if his thoughts tended that way, by her appearance at a short distance, on which he hurried forward to meet her. Her squire, Mr. Tapley, at the same time,

fell discreetly back, and surveyed the fog above him with an appearance of attentive interest.

"My dear Martin," said Mary.

"My dear Mary," said Martin; and lovers are such a singular kind of people that this is all they did say just then, though Martin took her arm, and her hand too, and they paced up and down a short walk that was least exposed to observation, half-a-dozen times.

"If you have changed at all, my love, since we parted," said Martin at length, as he looked upon her with a proud delight, "it is only to be more beautiful than ever!"

Had she been of the common metal of love-worn young ladies, she would have denied this in her most interesting manner; and would have told him that she knew she had become a perfect fright; or that she had wasted away with weeping and anxiety; or that she was dwindling gently into an early grave; or that her mental sufferings were unspeakable; or would, either by tears or words, or a mixture of both, have furnished him with some other information to that effect, and made him as miserable as possible. But she had been reared up in a sterner school than the minds of most young girls are formed in; she had had her nature strengthened by the hands of hard endurance and necessity; had come out from her young trials constant, self-denying, earnest, and devoted; had acquired in her maidenhood—whether happily in the end, for herself or him, is foreign to our present purpose to inquire—something of that nobler quality of gentle hearts which is developed often by the sorrows and struggles of matronly years, but often by their lessons only. Unspoiled, unpampered in her joys or griefs; with frank, and full, and deep affection for the object of her early love; she saw in him one who for her sake was an outcast from his home and fortune, and she had no more idea of bestowing that love upon him in other than cheerful and sustaining words, full of high hope and grateful trustfulness, than she had of being unworthy of it, in her lightest thought or deed, for any base temptation that the world could offer.

"What change is there in *you*, Martin," she replied; "for that concerns me nearest? You look more anxious and more thoughtful than you used."

"Why as to that, my love," said Martin, as he drew her waist within his arm, first looking round to see that there were no observers near, and beholding Mr. Tapley more intent than ever on the fog; "it would be strange if I did not; for my life—especially of late—has been a hard one."

"I know it must have been," she answered. "When have I forgotten to think of it and you?"

"Not often, I hope," said Martin. "Not often, I am sure. Not often, I have some right to expect, Mary; for I have undergone a great deal of vexation and privation, and I naturally look for that return, you know."

"A very, very poor return," she answered with a fainter smile. "But you have it, and will have it always. You have paid a dear price for a poor heart, Martin; but it is at least your own, and a true one."

"Of course I feel quite certain of that," said

Martin, "or I shouldn't have put myself in my present position. And don't say a poor heart, Mary, for I say a rich one. Now, I am about to break a design to you, dearest, which will startle you at first, but which is undertaken for your sake. I am going," he added slowly, looking far into the deep wonder of her bright dark eyes, "abroad."

"Abroad, Martin!"

"Only to America. See now—how you droop directly!"

"If I do, or, I hope I may say, if I did," she answered, raising her head after a short silence, and looking once more into his face, "it was for grief to think of what you are resolved to undergo for me. I would not venture to dissuade you, Martin; but it is a long, long distance; there is a wide ocean to be crossed; illness and want are sad calamities in any place, but in a foreign country dreadful to endure. Have you thought of all this?"

"Thought of it!" cried Martin, abating, in his fondness—and he *was* very fond of her—hardly an iota of his usual impetuosity. "What am I to do? It's very well to say, 'Have I thought of it?' my love; but you should ask me in the same breath, have I thought of starving at home; have I thought of doing porter's work for a living; have I thought of holding horses in the streets to earn my roll of bread from day to day? Come, come," he added, in a gentler tone, "do not hang down your head, my dear, for I need the encouragement that your sweet face alone can give me. Why, that's well! Now you are brave again."

"I am endeavouring to be," she answered, smiling through her tears.

"Endavouring to be anything that's good, and being it, is, with you, all one. Don't I know that of old?" cried Martin, gaily. "So! That's famous! Now I can tell you all my plans as cheerfully as if you were my little wife already, Mary."

She hung more closely on his arm, and looking upward in his face, bade him speak on.

"You see," said Martin, playing with the little hand upon his wrist, "that my attempts to advance myself at home have been baffled and rendered abortive. I will not say by whom, Mary, for that would give pain to us both. But so it is. Have you heard him speak of late of any relative of mine or his, called Pecksniff? Only tell me what I ask you, no more."

"I have heard, to my surprise, that he is a better man than was supposed."

"I thought so," interrupted Martin.

"And that it is likely we may come to know

him, if not to visit and reside with him and—I think—his daughters. He *has* daughters, has he, love?"

"A pair of them," Martin answered. "A precious pair! Gems of the first water!"

"Ah! You are jesting!"

"There is a sort of jesting which is very much in earnest, and includes some pretty serious disgust," said Martin. "I jest in reference to Mr. Pecksniff (at whose house I have been living as his assistant, and at whose hands I have received insult and injury), in that vein. Whatever betides, or however closely you may be brought into communication with his family, never forget that, Mary; and never for an instant, whatever appearances may seem to contradict me, lose sight of this assurance—Pecksniff is a scoundrel."

"Indeed!"

"In thought, and in deed, and in everything else. A scoundrel from the topmost hair of his head, to the nethermost atom of his heel. Of his daughters I will only say that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, they are dutiful young ladies, and take after their father closely. This is a digression from the main point, and yet it brings me to what I was going to say."

He stopped to look into her eyes again, and seeing, in a hasty glance over his shoulder, that there was no one near, and that Mark was still intent upon the fog, not only looked at her lips too, but kissed them into the bargain.

"Now, I am going to America, with great prospects of doing well, and of returning home myself very soon; it may be to take you there for a few years, but, at all events, to claim you for my wife; which, after such trials, I should do with no fear of your still thinking it a duty to cleave to him who will not suffer me to live (for this is true), if he can help it, in my own land. How long I may be absent is, of course, uncertain; but it shall not be very long. Trust me for that."

"In the meantime, dear Martin—"

"That's the very thing I am coming to. In the meantime you shall hear, constantly, of all my goings-on. Thus."

He paused to take from his pocket the letter he had written over-night, and then resumed:

"In this fellow's employment, and living in this fellow's house (by fellow, I mean Mr. Pecksniff, of course), there is a certain person of the name of Pinch—don't forget it; a poor, strange, simple oddity, Mary; but thoroughly honest and sincere; full of zeal, and with a cordial regard for me; which I mean to return one of these days, by setting him up in life in some way or other."

"Your old kind nature, Martin!"

"Oh!" said Martin, "that's not worth speaking of, my love. He's very grateful and desirous to serve me; and I am more than repaid. Now one night I told this Pinch my history, and all about myself and you; in which he was not a little interested, I can tell you, for he knows you! Aye, you may look surprised—and the longer the better, for it becomes you—but you have heard him play the organ in the church of that village before now; and he has seen you listening to his music; and has caught his inspiration from you, too!"

"Was *he* the organist?" cried Mary. "I thank him from my heart."

"Yes he was," said Martin, "and is, and gets nothing for it either. There never was such a simple fellow! Quite an infant! But a very good sort of creature, I assure you."

"I am sure of that," she said, with great earnestness. "He must be!"

"Oh, yes, no doubt at all about it," rejoined Martin, in his usual careless way. "He is. Well! It has occurred to me—but stay, if I read you what I have written and intend sending to him by post to-night, it will explain itself. 'My dear Tom Pinch.' That's rather familiar, perhaps," said Martin, suddenly remembering that he was proud when they had last met, "but I call him my dear Tom Pinch, because he likes it, and it pleases him."

"Very right, and very kind," said Mary.

"Exactly so!" cried Martin. "It's as well to be kind whenever one can; and, as I said before, he really is an excellent fellow. 'My dear Tom Pinch,—I address this under cover to Mrs. Lupin, at the Blue Dragon, and have begged her in a short note to deliver it to you without saying anything about it elsewhere; and to do the same with all future letters she may receive from me. My reason for so doing will be at once apparent to you'—I don't know that it will be, by the bye," said Martin, breaking off, "for he's slow of comprehension, poor fellow; but he'll find it out in time. My reason simply is, that I don't want my letters to be read by other people; and particularly by the scoundrel whom he thinks an angel."

"Mr. Pecksniff again?" asked Mary.

"The same," said Martin: "'—will be at once apparent to you. I have completed my arrangements for going to America; and you will be surprised to hear that I am to be accompanied by Mark Tapley, upon whom I have stumbled strangely in London, and who insists on putting himself under my protection'—"

meaning, my love," said Martin, breaking off again, "our friend in the rear, of course."

She was delighted to hear this, and bestowed a kind glance upon Mark, which he brought his eyes down from the fog to encounter, and received with immense satisfaction. She said in his hearing, too, that he was a good soul and a merry creature, and would be faithful, she was certain; commendations which Mr. Tapley inwardly resolved to deserve, from such lips, if he died for it.

"Now, my dear Pinch," resumed Martin, proceeding with his letter; "'I am going to repose great trust in you, knowing that I may do so with perfect reliance on your honour and secrecy, and having nobody else just now to trust in.'"

"I don't think I would say that, Martin."

"Wouldn't you? Well! I'll take that out. It's perfectly true, though."

"But it might seem ungracious, perhaps."

"Oh, I don't mind Pinch," said Martin. "There's no occasion to stand on any ceremony with *him*. However, I'll take it out, as you wish it, and make the full stop at 'secrecy.' Very well! 'I shall not only'—this is the letter again, you know."

"I understand."

"I shall not only enclose my letters to the young lady of whom I have told you, to your charge, to be forwarded as she may request; but I most earnestly commit her, the young lady herself, to your care and regard, in the event of your meeting in my absence. I have reason to think that the probabilities of your encountering each other—perhaps very frequently—are now neither remote nor few; and although in your position you can do very little to lessen the uneasiness of hers, I trust to you implicitly to do that much, and so deserve the confidence I have reposed in you.' You see, my dear Mary," said Martin, "it will be a great consolation to you to have anybody, no matter how simple, with whom you can speak about ME; and the very first time you talk to Pinch, you'll feel at once, that there is no more occasion for any embarrassment or hesitation in talking to him, than if he were an old woman."

"However that may be," she returned, smiling, "he is your friend, and that is enough."

"Oh, yes, he's my friend," said Martin, "certainly. In fact, I have told him in so many words that we'll always take notice of him, and protect him: and it's a good trait in his character that he's grateful—very grateful indeed. You'll like him of all things, my love, I know. You'll observe very much that's comical and

old-fashioned about Pinch, but you needn't mind laughing at him; for he'll not care about it. He'll rather like it, indeed!"

"I don't think I shall put that to the test, Martin."

"You won't if you can help it, of course," he said, "but I think you'll find him a little too much for your gravity. However, that's neither here nor there, and it certainly is not the letter; which ends thus: 'Knowing that I need not impress the nature and extent of that confidence upon you at any greater length, as it is already sufficiently established in your mind, I will only say in bidding you farewell, and looking forward to our next meeting, that I shall charge myself from this time, through all changes for the better, with your advancement and happiness, as if they were my own. You may rely upon that. And always believe me, my dear Tom Pinch, faithfully your friend, Martin Chuzzlewit. P.S. I enclose the amount which you so kindly'—Oh," said Martin, checking himself, and folding up the letter, "that's nothing!"

At this crisis Mark Tapley interposed, with an apology for remarking that the clock at the Horse Guards was striking.

"Which I shouldn't have said nothing about, sir," added Mark, "if the young lady hadn't begged me to be particular in mentioning it."

"I did," said Mary. "Thank you. You are quite right. In another minute I shall be ready to return. We have time for a very few words more, dear Martin, and although I had much to say, it must remain unsaid until the happy time of our next meeting. Heaven send it may come speedily and prosperously! But I have no fear of that."

"Fear!" cried Martin. "Why, who has? What are a few months? What is a whole year? When I come gaily back, with a road through life hewn out before me, then indeed, looking back upon this parting, it may seem a dismal one. But now! I swear I wouldn't have it happen under more favourable auspices, if I could: for then I should be less inclined to go, and less impressed with the necessity."

"Yes, yes. I feel that too. When do you go?"

"To-night. We leave for Liverpool to-night. A vessel sails from that port, as I hear, in three days. In a month, or less, we shall be there. Why, what's a month! How many months have flown by since our last parting!"

"Long to look back upon," said Mary, echoing his cheerful tone, "but nothing in their course!"

"Nothing at all!" cried Martin. "I shall

have change of scene and change of place: change of people, change of manners, change of cares and hopes! Time will wear wings indeed! I can bear anything, so that I have swift action, Mary."

Was he thinking solely of her care for him, when he took so little heed of her share in the separation; of her quiet monotonous endurance, and her slow anxiety from day to day? Was there nothing jarring and discordant even in his tone of courage, with this one note 'self' for ever audible, however high the strain? Not in her ears. It had been better otherwise, perhaps, but so it was. She heard the same bold spirit which had flung away as dross all gain and profit for her sake, making light of peril and privation that she might be calm and happy; and she heard no more. That heart where self has found no place and raised no throne, is slow to recognise its ugly presence when it looks upon it. As one possessed of an evil spirit was held in old time to be alone conscious of the lurking demon in the breasts of other men, so kindred vices know each other in their hiding-places every day, when Virtue is incredulous and blind.

"The quarter's gone!" cried Mr. Tapley, in a voice of admonition.

"I shall be ready to return immediately," she said. "One thing, dear Martin, I am bound to tell you. You entreated me a few minutes since only to answer what you asked me in reference to one theme, but you should and must know—otherwise I could not be at ease—that since that separation of which I was the unhappy occasion, he has never once uttered your name; has never coupled it, or any faint allusion to it, with passion or reproach; and has never abated in his kindness to me."

"I thank him for that last act," said Martin, "and for nothing else. Though on consideration I may thank him for his other forbearance also, inasmuch as I neither expect nor desire that he will mention my name again. He may once, perhaps—to couple it with reproach—in his will. Let him, if he please! By the time it reaches me, he will be in his grave: a satire on his own anger, God help him!"

"Martin! If you would but sometimes, in some quiet hour; beside the winter fire; in the summer air; when you hear gentle music, or think of Death, or Home, or Childhood; if you would at such a season resolve to think, but once a month, or even once a year, of him, or any one who ever wronged you, you would forgive him in your heart, I know!"

"If I believed that to be true, Mary," he re-

plied, "I would resolve at no such time to bear him in my mind: wishing to spare myself the shame of such a weakness. I was not born to be the toy and puppet of any man, far less his; to whose pleasure and caprice, in return for any good he did me, my whole youth was sacrificed. It became between us two a fair exchange—a barter—and no more: and there is no such balance against me that I need throw in a mawkish forgiveness to poise the scale. He has forbidden all mention of me to you, I know," he added hastily. "Come! Has he not?"

"That was long ago," she returned; "immediately after your parting; before you had left the house. He has never done so since."

"He has never done so since, because he has seen no occasion," said Martin; "but that is of little consequence, one way or other. Let all allusion to him between you and me be interdicted from this time forth. And therefore, love—" he drew her quickly to him, for the time of parting had now come—"in the first letter that you write to me through the Post-office, addressed to New York; and in all the others that you send through Pinch; remember he has no existence, but has become to us as one who is dead. Now, God bless you! This is a strange place for such a meeting and such a parting; but our next meeting shall be in a better, and our next and last parting in a worse."

"One other question, Martin, I must ask. Have you provided money for this journey?"

"Have I?" cried Martin; it might have been in his pride; it might have been in his desire to set her mind at ease: "Have I provided money? Why, there's a question for an emigrant's wife! How could I move on land or sea without it, love?"

"I mean, enough."

"Enough! More than enough. Twenty times more than enough. A pocket-full. Mark and I, for all essential ends, are quite as rich as if we had the purse of Fortunatus in our baggage."

"The half-hour's a-going!" cried Mr. Tapley.

"Good-bye a hundred times!" cried Mary, in a trembling voice.

But how cold the comfort in Good-bye! Mark Tapley knew it perfectly. Perhaps he knew it from his reading, perhaps from his experience, perhaps from intuition. It is impossible to say; but however he knew it, his knowledge instinctively suggested to him the wisest course of proceeding that any man could have adopted under the circumstances. He was taken with a violent fit of sneezing, and

was obliged to turn his head another way. In doing which, he, in a manner, fenced and screened the lovers into a corner by themselves.

There was a short pause, but Mark had an undefined sensation that it was a satisfactory one in its way. Then Mary, with her veil lowered, passed him with a quick step, and beckoned him to follow. She stopped once more before they lost that corner; looked back; and waved her hand to Martin. He made a start towards them at the moment as if he had some other farewell words to say; but she only hurried off the faster, and Mr. Tapley followed as in duty bound.

When he rejoined Martin again in his own chamber, he found that gentleman seated moodily before the dusty grate, with his two feet on the fender, his two elbows on his knees, and his chin supported in a not very ornamental manner, on the palms of his hands.

"Well, Mark?"

"Well, sir," said Mark, taking a long breath, "I see the young lady safe home, and I feel pretty comfortable after it. She sent a lot of kind words, sir, and this," handing him a ring, "for a parting keepsake."

"Diamonds!" said Martin, kissing it—let us do him justice, it was for her sake; not for theirs—and putting it on his little finger. "Splendid diamonds. My grandfather is a singular character, Mark. He must have given her this, now."

Mark Tapley knew as well that she had bought it, to the end that that unconscious speaker might carry some article of sterling value with him in his necessity, as he knew that it was day, and not night. Though he had no more acquaintance of his own knowledge with the history of the glittering trinket on Martin's outspread finger, than Martin himself had, he was as certain that in its purchase she had expended her whole stock of hoarded money, as if he had seen it paid down coin by coin. Her lover's strange obtuseness in relation to this little incident, promptly suggested to Mark's mind its real cause and root; and from that moment he had a clear and perfect insight into the one absorbing principle of Martin's character.

"She is worthy of the sacrifices I have made," said Martin, folding his arms, and looking at the ashes in the stove, as if in resumption of some former thoughts. "Well worthy of them. No riches,"—here he stroked his chin, and mused—"could have compensated for the loss of such a nature. Not to mention that in gaining her affection, I have followed the bent of

my own wishes, and balked the selfish schemes of others who had no right to form them. She is quite worthy—more than worthy—of the sacrifices I have made. Yes, she is. No doubt of it."

These ruminations might or might not have reached Mark Tapley; for though they were by no means addressed to him, yet they were softly uttered. In any case, he stood there, watching Martin, with an indescribable and most involved expression on his visage, until that young man roused himself and looked towards him; when he turned away, as being suddenly intent on certain preparations for the journey, and, without giving vent to any articulate sound, smiled with surpassing ghastliness, and seemed by a twist of his features and a motion of his lips, to release himself of this word:

"Jolly!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE BURDEN WHEREOF IS, HAIL, COLUMBIA!



A DARK and dreary night; people nestling in their beds or circling late about the fire; Want, colder than Charity, shivering at the street corners; church-towers humming with the faint vibration of their own tongues, but newly resting from the ghostly preachment "One!" The earth covered with a sable pall as for the burial of yesterday; the clumps of dark trees, its giant plumes of funeral feathers, waving sadly to and fro: all hushed, all noiseless, and in deep repose, save the swift clouds that skim across the moon, and the cautious wind, as, creeping after them upon the ground, it stops to listen, and goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a savage on the trail.

Whither go the clouds and wind, so eagerly? If, like guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild region do the elements hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport?

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here, roaring, raging, shrieking, howling, all night long. Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast of that small island, sleeping, a thousand miles away, so quietly in the midst of angry waves; and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from unknown desert places of the world. Here, in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet

with each other, until the sea, lashed into passion like their own, leaps up, in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is madness.

On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here, and yet are not; for what is now the one, is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit, and flight, and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggle, ending in a spouting-up of foam that whitens the black night; incessant change of place, and form, and hue; constancy in nothing, but eternal strife; on, on, on, they roll, and darker grows the night, and louder howl the winds, and more clamorous and fierce become the million voices in the sea, when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm "A ship!"

Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall masts trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain; onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as hiding for the moment from its fury; and every storm-voice in the air and water, cries more loudly yet, "A ship!"

Still she comes striving on: and at her boldness and the spreading cry, the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary heads to look; and round about the vessel, far as the mariners on her decks can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her, forcing each other down, and starting up, and rushing forward from afar, in dreadful curiosity. High over her they break; and round her surge and roar; and giving place to others, moaningly depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their baffled anger: still she comes onward bravely. And though the eager multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there, asleep: as if no deadly element were peering in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below.

Among these sleeping voyagers were Martin and Mark Tapley, who, rocked into a heavy drowsiness by the unaccustomed motion, were as insensible to the foul air in which they lay, as to the uproar without. It was broad day, when the latter awoke with a dim idea that he was dreaming of having gone to sleep in a four-post bedstead which had turned bottom upwards in the course of the night. There was more reason in this too, than in the roasting of eggs; for the

first objects Mr. Tapley recognised when he opened his eyes were his own heels—looking down at him, as he afterwards observed, from a nearly perpendicular elevation.

"Well!" said Mark, getting himself into a sitting posture, after various ineffectual struggles with the rolling of the ship. "This is the first time as ever I stood on my head 'till night."

"You shouldn't go to sleep upon the ground with your head to leeward, then," growled a man in one of the berths.

"With my head to *where*?" asked Mark.

The man repeated his previous sentiment.

"No, I won't another time," said Mark, "when I know whereabouts on the map that country is. In the meanwhile I can give you a better piece of advice. Don't you nor any other friend of mine never go to sleep with his head in a ship, any more."

The man gave a grunt of discontented acquiescence, turned over in his berth, and drew his blanket over his head.

"—For," said Mr. Tapley, pursuing the theme by way of soliloquy, in a low tone of voice; "the sea is as nonsensical a thing as any going. It never knows what to do with itself. It hasn't got no employment for its mind, and is always in a state of vacancy. Like them Polar bears in the wild-beast-shows as is constantly a nodding their heads from side to side, it never *can* be quiet. Which is entirely owing to its uncommon stupidity."

"Is that you, Mark?" asked a faint voice from another berth.

"It's as much of me as is left, sir, after a fortnight of this work," Mr. Tapley replied. "What with leading the life of a fly, ever since I've been aboard—for I've been perpetually holding-on to something or other, in a upside-down position—what with that, sir, and putting a very little into myself, and taking a good deal out of yourself, there an't too much of me to swear by. How do *you* find yourself this morning, sir?"

"Very miserable," said Martin, with a peevish groan. "Ugh! This is wretched, indeed!"

"Creditable," muttered Mark, pressing one hand upon his aching head and looking round him with a rueful grin. "That's the great comfort. It *is* creditable to keep up one's spirits here. Virtue's its own reward. So's jollity."

Mark was so far right, that unquestionably any man who retained his cheerfulness among the steerage accommodations of that noble and fast-sailing line-of-packet ship, "The Screw," was solely indebted to his own resources, and shipped his good humour, like his provisions,

without any contribution or assistance from the owners. A dark, low, stifling cabin, surrounded by berths all filled to overflowing with men, women, and children, in various stages of sickness and misery, is not the liveliest place of assembly at any time; but when it is so crowded (as the steerage cabin of "The Screw" was, every passage out), that mattresses and beds are heaped upon the floor, to the extinction of everything like comfort, cleanliness, and decency, it is liable to operate not only as a pretty strong barrier against amiability of temper, but as a positive encourager of selfish and rough humours. Mark felt this, as he sat looking about him; and his spirits rose proportionately.

There were English people, Irish people, Welsh people, and Scotch people there; all with their little store of coarse food and shabby clothes; and nearly all, with their families of children. There were children of all ages; from the baby at the breast, to the slattern-girl who was as much a grown woman as her mother. Every kind of domestic suffering that is bred in poverty, illness, banishment, sorrow, and long travel in bad weather, was crammed into the little space; and yet was there infinitely less of complaint and querulousness, and infinitely more of mutual assistance and general kindness to be found in that unwholesome ark, than in many brilliant ball-rooms.

Mark looked about him wistfully, and his face brightened as he looked. Here an old grandmother was crooning over a sick child, and rocking it to and fro, in arms hardly more wasted than its own young limbs; here a poor woman with an infant in her lap, mended another little creature's clothes, and quieted another who was creeping up about her from their scanty bed upon the floor. Here were old men awkwardly engaged in little household offices, wherein they would have been ridiculous but for their good-will and kind purpose; and here were swarthy fellows—giants in their way—doing such little acts of tenderness for those about them, as might have belonged to gentlest-hearted dwarfs. The very idiot in the corner who sat mowing there, all day, had his faculty of imitation roused by what he saw about him; and snapped his fingers, to amuse a crying child.

"Now, then," said Mark, nodding to a woman who was dressing her three children at no great distance from him—and the grin upon his face had by this time spread from ear to ear—"Hand over one of them young uns according to custom."

"I wish you'd get breakfast, Mark, instead of worrying with people who don't belong to you," observed Martin, petulantly.

"All right," said Mark. "*She'll* do that. It's a fair division of labour, sir. I wash her boys, and she makes our tea. I never *could* make tea, but any one can wash a boy."

The woman, who was delicate and ill, felt and understood his kindness, as well she might, for she had been covered every night with his great-coat, while he had had for his own bed the bare boards and a rug. But, Martin, who seldom got up or looked about him, was quite incensed for the folly of this speech, and expressed his dissatisfaction by an impatient groan.

"So it is, certainly," said Mark, brushing the child's hair as coolly as if he had been born and bred a barber.

"What are you talking about, now?" asked Martin.

"What you said," replied Mark; "or what you meant, when you gave that there dismal vent to your feelings. I quite go along with it, sir. It *is* very hard upon her."

"What is?"

"Making the voyage by herself along with these young impediments here, and going such a way at such a time of the year to join her husband. If you don't want to be driven mad with yellow soap in your eye, young man," said Mr. Tapley to the second urchin, who was by this time under his hands at the basin, "you'd better shut it."

"Where does she join her husband?" asked Martin, yawning.

"Why, I'm very much afraid," said Mr. Tapley, in a low voice, "that she don't know. I hope she mayn't miss him. But she sent her last letter by hand, and it don't seem to have been very clearly understood between 'em without it, and if she don't see him a waving his pocket-hankerchief on the shore, like a picture out of a song-book, my opinion is, she'll break her heart."

"Why, how, in Folly's name, does the woman come to be on board ship on such a wild-goose venture!" cried Martin.

Mr. Tapley glanced at him for a moment as he lay prostrate in his berth, and then said, very quietly,

"Ah! How, indeed! I can't think! He's been away from her, for two year; she's been very poor and lonely in her own country; and has always been a looking forward to meeting him. It's very strange she should be here. Quite amazing! A little mad, perhaps! There can't be no other way of accounting for it."

Martin was too far gone in the lassitude of sea-sickness to make any reply to these words, or even to attend to them as they were spoken.



ON BOARD THE "SCREW."

And the subject of their discourse returning at this crisis with some hot tea, effectually put a stop to any resumption of the theme by Mr. Tapley; who, when the meal was over and he had adjusted Martin's bed, went up on deck to wash the breakfast service, which consisted of two half-pint tin mugs, and a shaving-pot of the same metal.

It is due to Mark Tapley to state, that he suffered at least as much from sea-sickness as

any man, woman, or child, on board; and that he had a peculiar faculty of knocking himself about on the smallest provocation, and losing his legs at every lurch of the ship. But resolved, in his usual phrase, to "come out strong" under disadvantageous circumstances, he was the life and soul of the steerage, and made no more of stopping in the middle of a facetious conversation, to go away and be excessively ill by himself, and afterwards come back in the very best



"IT IS IN SUCH ENLIGHTENED MEANS," SAID A VOICE ALMOST IN MARTIN'S EAR, "THAT THE BUBBLING PASSIONS OF MY COUNTRY FIND A VENT."

and gayest of tempers to resume it, than if such a course of proceeding had been the commonest in the world.

It cannot be said that as his illness wore off, his cheerfulness and good-nature increased, because they would hardly admit of augmentation; but his usefulness among the weaker members of the party was much enlarged; and at all times and seasons there he was exerting it. If a gleam of sun shone out of the dark sky, down Mark tumbled into the cabin, and presently up he came again with a woman in his arms, or
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 9.

half-a-dozen children, or a man, or a bed, or a saucepan, or a basket, or something animate or inanimate, that he thought would be the better for the air. If an hour or two of fine weather in the middle of the day, tempted those who seldom or never came on deck at other times, to crawl into the long-boat, or lie down upon the spare spars, and try to eat, there, in the centre of the group, was Mr. Tapley, handing about salt beef and biscuit, or dispensing tastes of grog, or cutting up the children's provisions with his pocket-knife, for their greater ease and

comfort, or reading aloud from a venerable newspaper, or singing some roaring old song to a select party, or writing the beginnings of letters to their friends at home for people who couldn't write, or cracking jokes with the crew, or nearly getting blown over the side, or emerging, half-drowned, from a shower of spray, or lending a hand somewhere or other: but always doing something for the general entertainment. At night, when the cooking-fire was lighted on the deck, and the driving sparks that flew among the rigging, and the cloud of sails, seemed to menace the ship with certain annihilation by fire, in case the elements of air and water failed to compass her destruction; there, again, was Mr. Tapley, with his coat off and his shirt-sleeves turned up to his elbows, doing all kinds of culinary offices; compounding the strangest dishes; recognised by every one as an established authority; and helping all parties to achieve something, which, left to themselves, they never could have done, and never would have dreamed of. In short, there never was a more popular character than Mark Tapley became, on board that noble and fast-sailing line-of-packet ship, the *Screw*; and he attained at last to such a pitch of universal admiration, that he began to have grave doubts within himself whether a man might reasonably claim any credit for being jolly under such exciting circumstances.

"If this was going to last," said Mr. Tapley, "there'd be no great difference as I can perceive, between the *Screw* and the *Dragon*. I never *am* to get any credit, I think. I begin to be afraid that the Fates is determined to make the world easy to me."

"Well, Mark," said Martin, near whose berth he had ruminated to this effect. "When will this be over?"

"Another week, they say, sir," returned Mark, "will most likely bring us into port. The ship's a going along at present, as sensible as a ship can, sir; though I don't mean to say as that's any very high praise."

"I don't think it is indeed," groaned Martin.

"You'd feel all the better for it, sir, if you was to turn out," observed Mark.

"And be seen by the ladies and gentlemen on the after-deck," returned Martin, with a scornful emphasis upon the words, "mingling with the beggarly crowd that are stowed away in this vile hole. I should be greatly the better for that, no doubt!"

"I'm thankful that I can't say from my own experience what the feelings of a gentleman may be," said Mark, "but I should have thought, sir, as a gentleman would feel a deal more

uncomfortable down here, than up in the fresh air, especially when the ladies and gentlemen in the after-cabin know just as much about him, as he does about them, and are likely to trouble their heads about him in the same proportion. I should have thought that, certainly."

"I tell you, then," rejoined Martin, "you would have thought wrong, and do think wrong."

"Very likely, sir," said Mark, with imper-turbable good temper. "I often do."

"As to lying here," cried Martin, raising himself on his elbow, and looking angrily at his follower. "Do you suppose it's a pleasure to lie here?"

"All the madhouses in the world," said Mr. Tapley, "couldn't produce such a maniac as the man must be who could think that."

"Then why are you for ever goading and urging me to get up?" asked Martin. "I lie here because I don't wish to be recognised, in the better days to which I aspire, by any purse-proud citizen, as the man who came over with him among the steerage passengers. I lie here, because I wish to conceal my circumstances and myself, and not to arrive in a new world badged and ticketed as an utterly poverty-stricken man. If I could have afforded a passage in the after-cabin, I should have held up my head with the rest. As I couldn't, I hide it. Do you understand that?"

"I am very sorry, sir," said Mark. "I didn't know you took it so much to heart as this comes to."

"Of course you didn't know," returned his master. "How should you know, unless I told you? It's no trial to *you*, Mark, to make yourself comfortable and to bustle about. It's as natural for you to do so under the circumstances as it is for me not to do so. Why, you don't suppose there is a living creature in this ship who can by possibility have half so much to undergo on board of her as *I* have? Do you?" he asked, sitting upright in his berth, and looking at Mark, with an expression of great earnestness not unmixed with wonder.

Mark twisted his face into a tight knot, and with his head very much on one side pondered upon this question as if he felt it an extremely difficult one to answer. He was relieved from his embarrassment by Martin himself, who said, as he stretched himself upon his back again and resumed the book he had been reading:

"But what is the use of my putting such case to you, when the very essence of what I have been saying, is, that you cannot by possibility understand it! Make me a little brandy-and-water—cold and very weak—and give me a

biscuit, and tell your friend, who is a nearer neighbour of ours than I could wish, to try and keep her children a little quieter to-night than she did last night; that's a good fellow."

Mr. Tapley set himself to obey these orders with great alacrity, and pending their execution, it may be presumed his flagging spirits revived: inasmuch as he several times observed, below his breath, that in respect of its power of imparting a credit to jollity, the Screw unquestionably had some decided advantages over the Dragon. He also remarked, that it was a high gratification to him to reflect that he would carry its main excellence ashore with him, and have it constantly beside him wherever he went; but what he meant by these consolatory thoughts he did not explain.

And now a general excitement began to prevail on board; and various predictions relative to the precise day, and even the precise hour at which they would reach New York, were freely broached. There was infinitely more crowding on deck and looking over the ship's side than there had been before; and an epidemic broke out for packing up things every morning, which required unpacking again every night. Those who had any letters to deliver, or any friends to meet, or any settled plans of going anywhere or doing anything, discussed their prospects a hundred times a day; and as this class of passengers was very small, and the number of those who had no prospects whatever was very large, there were plenty of listeners and few talkers. Those who had been ill all along, got well now, and those who had been well got better. An American gentleman in the after-cabin, who had been wrapped up in fur and oilskin the whole passage, unexpectedly appeared in a very shiny, tall, black hat, and constantly overhauled a very little valise of pale leather, which contained his clothes, linen, brushes, shaving apparatus, books, trinkets, and other baggage. He likewise stuck his hands deep into his pockets, and walked the deck with his nostrils dilated, as already inhaling the air of Freedom which carries death to all tyrants, and can never (under any circumstances worth mentioning) be breathed by slaves. An English gentleman who was strongly suspected of having run away from a bank, with something in his possession belonging to its strong box besides the key, grew eloquent upon the subject of the rights of man, and hummed the Marseillaise Hymn constantly. In a word, one great sensation pervaded the whole ship, and the soil of America lay close before them: so close at last, that, upon a certain starlight night, they

took a pilot on board, and within a few hours afterwards lay to until the morning, awaiting the arrival of a steamboat in which the passengers were to be conveyed ashore.

Off she came, soon after it was light next morning, and, lying alongside an hour or more—during which period her very firemen were objects of hardly less interest and curiosity, than if they had been so many angels, good or bad—took all her living freight aboard. Among them, Mark, who still had his friend and her three children under his close protection; and Martin, who had once more dressed himself in his usual attire, but wore a soiled, old cloak above his ordinary clothes, until such time as he should separate for ever from his late companions.

The steamer—which, with its machinery on deck, looked, as it worked its long slim legs, like some enormously magnified insect or antediluvian monster—dashed at great speed up a beautiful bay: and presently they saw some heights, and islands, and a long, flat, straggling city.

"And this," said Mr. Tapley, looking far ahead, "is the Land of Liberty, is it? Very well. I'm agreeable. Any land will do for me, after so much water!"

CHAPTER XVI.

MARTIN DISEMBARKS FROM THAT NOBLE AND FAST-SAILING LINE-OF-PACKET SHIP, THE SCREW, AT THE PORT OF NEW YORK, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. HE MAKES SOME ACQUAINTANCES, AND DINES AT A BOARDING-HOUSE. THE PARTICULARS OF THOSE TRANSACTIONS.

SOME trifling excitement prevailed upon the very brink and margin of the land of liberty; for an alderman had been elected the day before; and party feeling naturally running rather high on such an exciting occasion, the friends of the disappointed candidate had found it necessary to assert the great principles of Purity of Election and Freedom of Opinion by breaking a few legs and arms, and furthermore pursuing one obnoxious gentleman through the streets with the design of slitting his nose. These good-natured little outbursts of the popular fancy were not in themselves sufficiently remarkable to create any great stir, after the lapse of a whole night; but they found fresh life and notoriety in the breath of the news-boys, who not only proclaimed them with shrill yells in all the highways and byeways of the town, upon the wharves and among the shipping, but on the deck and down in the

cabins of the steam-boat; which, before she touched the shore, was boarded and overrun by a legion of those young citizens.

"Here's this morning's New York Sewer!" cried one. "Here's this morning's New York Stabber! Here's the New York Family Spy! Here's the New York Private Listener! Here's the New York Peeper! Here's the New York Plunderer! Here's the New York Keyhole Reporter! Here's the New York Rowdy Journal! Here's all the New York papers! Here's full particulars of the patriotic locofoco movement yesterday, in which the whigs was so chewed up; and the last Alabama gouging case; and the interesting Arkansas dooel with Bowie knives; and all the Political, Commercial, and Fashionable News. Here they are! Here they are! Here's the papers, here's the papers!"

"Here's the Sewer!" cried another. "Here's the New York Sewer! Here's some of the twelfth thousand of to-day's Sewer, with the best account of the markets, and all the shipping news, and four whole columns of country correspondence, and a full account of the Ball at Mrs. White's last night, where all the beauty and fashion of New York was assembled; with the Sewer's own particulars of the private lives of all the ladies that was there! Here's the Sewer! Here's some of the twelfth thousand of the New York Sewer! Here's the Sewer's exposure of the Wall Street Gang, and the Sewer's exposure of the Washington Gang, and the Sewer's exclusive account of a flagrant act of dishonesty committed by the Secretary of State when he was eight years old; now communicated, at a great expense, by his own nurse. Here's the Sewer! Here's the New York Sewer, in its twelfth thousand, with a whole column of New Yorkers to be shown up, and all their names printed! Here's the Sewer's article upon the Judge that tried him, day afore yesterday, for libel, and the Sewer's tribute to the independent jury that didn't convict him, and the Sewer's account of what they might have expected if they had! Here's the Sewer, here's the Sewer! Here's the wide-awake Sewer; always on the look-out; the leading Journal of the United States. now in its twelfth thousand, and still a printing off:—Here's the New York Sewer!"

"It is in such enlightened means," said a voice almost in Martin's ear, "that the bubbling passions of my country find a vent."

Martin turned involuntarily, and saw, standing close at his side, a sallow gentleman, with sunken cheeks, black hair, small twinkling eyes, and a singular expression hovering about that

region of his face, which was not a frown, nor a leer, and yet might have been mistaken at the first glance for either. Indeed it would have been difficult, on a much closer acquaintance, to describe it in any more satisfactory terms than as a mixed expression of vulgar cunning and conceit. This gentleman wore a rather broad-brimmed hat for the greater wisdom of his appearance; and had his arms folded for the greater impressiveness of his attitude. He was somewhat shabbily dressed in a blue surtout reaching nearly to his ankles, short loose trousers of the same colour, and a faded buff waistcoat, through which a discoloured shirt-frill struggled to force itself into notice, as asserting an equality of civil rights with the other portions of his dress, and maintaining a declaration of Independence on its own account. His feet, which were of unusually large proportions, were leisurely crossed before him as he half leaned against, half sat upon, the steamboat's bulwark; and his thick cane, shod with a mighty ferule at one end and armed with a great metal knob at the other, depended from a line-and-tassel on his wrist. Thus attired, and thus composed into an aspect of great profundity, the gentleman twitched up the right-hand corner of his mouth and his right eye, simultaneously, and said, once more:

"It is in such enlightened means, that the bubbling passions of my country find a vent."

As he looked at Martin, and nobody else was by, Martin inclined his head, and said:

"You allude to—"

"To the Palladium of rational Liberty at home, sir, and the dread of Foreign oppression abroad," returned the gentleman, as he pointed with his cane to an uncommonly dirty news-boy with one eye. "To the Envy of the world, sir, and the leaders of Human Civilisation. Let me ask you, sir," he added, bringing the ferule of his stick heavily upon the deck with the air of a man who must not be equivocated with, "how do you like my Country?"

"I am hardly prepared to answer that question yet," said Martin, "seeing that I have not been ashore."

"Well, I should expect you were not prepared, sir," said the gentleman, "to behold such signs of National Prosperity as those?"

He pointed to the vessels lying at the wharves; and then gave a vague flourish with his stick, as if he would include the air and water, generally, in this remark.

"Really," said Martin, "I don't know. Yes. I think I was."

The gentleman glanced at him with a knowing

look, and said he liked his policy. It was natural, he said, and it pleased him as a philosopher to observe the prejudices of human nature.

"You have brought, I see, sir," he said, turning round towards Martin, and resting his chin on the top of his stick, "the usual amount of misery and poverty, and ignorance and crime, to be located in the bosom of the Great Republic. Well, sir! let 'em come on in ship-loads from the old country. When vessels are about to founder, the rats are said to leave 'em. There is considerable of truth, I find, in that remark."

"The old ship will keep afloat a year or two longer yet, perhaps," said Martin with a smile, partly occasioned by what the gentleman said, and partly by his manner of saying it, which was odd enough, for he emphasized all the small words and syllables in his discourse, and left the others to take care of themselves; as if he thought the larger parts of speech could be trusted alone, but the little ones required to be constantly looked after.

"Hope is said by the poet, sir," observed the gentleman, "to be the nurse of Young Desire."

Martin signified that he had heard of the cardinal virtue in question serving occasionally in that domestic capacity.

"She will not rear her infant in the present instance, sir, you'll find," observed the gentleman.

"Time will show," said Martin.

The gentleman nodded his head, gravely; and said, "What is your name, sir?"

Martin told him

"How old are you, sir?"

Martin told him.

"What is your profession, sir?"

Martin told him that, also.

"What is your destination, sir?" inquired the gentleman.

"Really," said Martin, laughing, "I can't satisfy you in that particular, for I don't know it myself."

"Yes?" said the gentleman.

"No," said Martin.

The gentleman adjusted his cane under his left arm, and took a more deliberate and complete survey of Martin than he had yet had leisure to make. When he had completed his inspection, he put out his right hand, shook Martin's hand, and said:

"My name is Colonel Diver, sir. I am the Editor of the New York Rowdy Journal."

Martin received the communication with that degree of respect which an announcement so distinguished appeared to demand.

"The New York Rowdy Journal, sir," re-

sumed the colonel, "is, as I expect you know, the organ of our aristocracy in this city."

"Oh! there *is* an aristocracy here, then?" said Martin. "Of what is it composed?"

"Of intelligence, sir," replied the colonel; "of intelligence and virtue. And of their necessary consequence in this republic—dollars, sir."

Martin was very glad to hear this, feeling well assured that if intelligence and virtue led, as a matter of course, to the acquisition of dollars, he would speedily become a great capitalist. He was about to express the gratification such news afforded him, when he was interrupted by the captain of the ship, who came up at the moment to shake hands with the colonel; and who, seeing a well-dressed stranger on the deck (for Martin had thrown aside his cloak), shook hands with him also. This was an unspeakable relief to Martin, who, in spite of the acknowledged supremacy of Intelligence and virtue in that happy country, would have been deeply mortified to appear before Colonel Diver in the poor character of a steerage passenger.

"Well, cap'en!" said the colonel.

"Well, colonel!" cried the captain. "You're looking most uncommon bright, sir. I can hardly realise its being you, and that's a fact."

"A good passage, cap'en?" inquired the colonel, taking him aside.

"Well now! It was a pretty spanking run, sir," said, or rather sung, the captain, who was a genuine New Englander: "con-siderin' the weather."

"Yes?" said the colonel.

"Well! It was, sir," said the captain. "I've just now sent a boy up to your office with the passenger-list, colonel."

"You haven't got another boy to spare, p'raps, cap'en?" said the colonel, in a tone almost amounting to severity.

"I guess there air a dozen if you want 'em, colonel," said the captain.

"One moderate big 'un could convey a dozen of champagne, perhaps," observed the colonel, musing, "to my office. You said a spanking run, I think?"

"Well! so I did," was the reply.

"It's very nigh you know," observed the colonel. "I'm glad it was a spanking run, cap'en. Don't mind about quarts, if you're short of 'em. The boy can as well bring four-and-twenty pints, and travel twice as once.—A first-rate spanker, cap'en, was it? Yes?"

"A most e—tarnal spanker," said the skipper.

"I admire at your good fortun, cap'en. You might loan me a corkscrew at the same time, and half-a-dozen glasses if you liked. However

bad the elements combine against my country's noble packet-ship the *Screw*, sir," said the colonel, turning to Martin, and drawing a flourish on the surface of the deck with his cane, "her passage either way, is almost certain to eventuate a spanker!"

The captain, who had the *Sewer* below at that moment, lurching expensively in one cabin, while the amiable *Stabber* was drinking himself into a state of blind madness in another, took a cordial leave of his friend the colonel, and hurried away to despatch the champagne: well knowing (as it afterwards appeared) that if he failed to conciliate the editor of the *Rowdy Journal*, that potentate would denounce him and his ship in large capitals before he was a day older; and would probably assault the memory of his mother also, who had not been dead more than twenty years. The colonel being again left alone with Martin, checked him as he was moving away, and offered, in consideration of his being an Englishman, to show him the town, and to introduce him, if such were his desire, to a genteel boarding-house. But before they entered on these proceedings (he said), he would beseech the honour of his company at the office of the *Rowdy Journal*, to partake of a bottle of champagne of his own importation.

All this was so extremely kind and hospitable, that Martin, though it was quite early in the morning, readily acquiesced. So, instructing Mark, who was deeply engaged with his friend and her three children, that when he had done assisting them, and had cleared the baggage, he was to wait for further orders at the *Rowdy Journal Office*, Martin accompanied his new friend on shore.

They made their way as they best could through the melancholy crowd of emigrants upon the wharf—who, grouped about their beds and boxes, with the bare ground below them and the bare sky above, might have fallen from another planet, for anything they knew of the country—and walked for some short distance along a busy street, bounded on one side by the quays and shipping; and on the other by a long row of staring red-brick storehouses and offices, ornamented with more black boards and white letters, and more white boards and black letters, than Martin had ever seen before, in fifty times the space. Presently they turned up a narrow street, and presently into other narrow streets, until at last they stopped before a house whereon was painted in great characters, "*ROWDY JOURNAL*."

The colonel, who had walked the whole way with one hand in his breast, his head occasionally

wagging from side to side, and his hat thrown back upon his ears—like a man who was oppressed to inconvenience by a sense of his own greatness—led the way up a dark and dirty flight of stairs into a room of similar character, all littered and bestrewn with odds and ends of newspapers and other crumpled fragments, both in proof and manuscript. Behind a mangy old writing-table in this apartment, sat a figure with a stump of a pen in his mouth and a great pair of scissors in its right hand, clipping and slicing at a file of *Rowdy Journals*; and it was such a laughable figure that Martin had some difficulty in preserving his gravity, though conscious of the close observation of Colonel Diver.

The individual who sat clipping and slicing as aforesaid at the *Rowdy Journals*, was a small young gentleman of very juvenile appearance, and unwholesomely pale in the face; partly, perhaps, from intense thought, but partly, there is no doubt, from the excessive use of tobacco, which he was at that moment chewing vigorously. He wore his shirt-collar turned down over a black ribbon; and his lank hair—a fragile crop—was not only smoothed and parted back from his brow, that none of the Poetry of his aspect might be lost, but had, here and there, been grubbed up by the roots: which accounted for his loftiest developments being somewhat pimply. He had that order of nose on which the envy of mankind has bestowed the appellation "snub," and it was very much turned up at the end, as with a lofty scorn. Upon the upper lip of this young gentleman, were tokens of a sandy down—so very, very smooth and scant, that, though encouraged to the utmost, it looked more like a recent trace of gingerbread, than the fair promise of a moustache; and this conjecture, his apparently tender age went far to strengthen. He was intent upon his work. Every time he snapped the great pair of scissors, he made a corresponding motion with his jaws, which gave him a very terrible appearance.

Martin was not long in determining within himself that this must be Colonel Diver's son; the hope of the family, and future mainspring of the *Rowdy Journal*. Indeed he had begun to say that he presumed this was the colonel's little boy, and that it was very pleasant to see him playing at Editor in all the guilelessness of childhood, when the colonel proudly interposed, and said:

"My War Correspondent, sir—Mr. Jefferson Brick!"

Martin could not help starting at this unexpected announcement, and the consciousness of the ir retrievable mistake he had nearly made.

Mr. Brick seemed pleased with the sensation he produced upon the stranger, and shook hands with him, with an air of patronage designed to reassure him, and to let him know that there was no occasion to be frightened, for he (Brick) wouldn't hurt him.

"You have heard of Jefferson Brick I see, sir," quoth the colonel, with a smile. "England has heard of Jefferson Brick. Europe has heard of Jefferson Brick. Let me see. When did you leave England, sir?"

"Five weeks ago," said Martin.

"Five weeks ago," repeated the colonel, thoughtfully; as he took his seat upon the table, and swung his legs. "Now let me ask you, sir, which of Mr. Brick's articles had become at that time the most obnoxious to the British Parliament and the court of Saint James's?"

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I——"

"I have reason to know, sir," interrupted the colonel, "that the aristocratic circles of your country quail before the name of Jefferson Brick. I should like to be informed, sir, from your lips, which of his sentiments has struck the deadliest blow——"

"At the hundred heads of the Hydra of Corruption now grovelling in the dust beneath the lance of Reason, and spouting up to the universal arch above us, its sanguinary gore," said Mr. Brick, putting on a little blue cloth cap with a glazed front, and quoting his last article.

"The libation of freedom, Brick,"—hinted the colonel.

"—Must sometimes be quaffed in blood, colonel," cried Brick. And when he said 'blood,' he gave the great pair of scissors a sharp snap, as if *they* said blood too, and were quite of his opinion.

This done, they both looked at Martin, pausing for a reply.

"Upon my life," said Martin, who had by this time quite recovered his usual coolness, "I can't give you any satisfactory information about it; for the truth is that I——"

"Stop!" cried the colonel, glancing sternly at his war correspondent, and giving his head one shake after every sentence. "That you never heard of Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never read Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never saw the Rowdy Journal, sir. That you never knew, sir, of its mighty influence upon the cabinets of Europe. Yes?"

"That's what I was about to observe, certainly," said Martin.

"Keep cool, Jefferson," said the colonel

gravely. "Don't bust! oh you Europeans! Arter that, let's have a glass of wine!" So saying, he got down from the table, and produced, from a basket outside the door, a bottle of champagne, and three glasses.

"Mr. Jefferson Brick, sir!" said the colonel, filling Martin's glass and his own, and pushing the bottle to that gentleman, "will give us a sentiment."

"Well, sir!" cried the war correspondent, "since you have concluded to call upon me, I will respond. I will give you, sir, The Rowdy Journal and its brethren; the well of Truth, whose waters are black from being composed of printers' ink, but are quite clear enough for my country to behold the shadow of her Destiny reflected in."

"Hear, hear!" cried the colonel, with great complacency. "There are flowery components, sir, in the language of my friend?"

"Very much so, indeed," said Martin.

"There is to-day's Rowdy, sir," observed the colonel, handing him a paper. "You'll find Jefferson Brick at his usual post in the van of human civilisation and moral purity."

The colonel was by this time seated on the table again. Mr. Brick also took up a position on that same piece of furniture; and they fell to drinking pretty hard. They often looked at Martin as he read the paper, and then at each other. When he laid it down, which was not until they had finished a second bottle, the colonel asked him what he thought of it.

"Why, it's horribly personal," said Martin.

The colonel seemed much flattered by this remark; and said he hoped it was.

"We are independent here, sir," said Mr. Jefferson Brick. "We do as we like."

"If I may judge from this specimen," returned Martin, "there must be a few thousands here, rather the reverse of independent, who do as they don't like."

"Well! They yield to the mighty mind of the Popular Instructor, sir," said the colonel. "They rile up, sometimes; but in general we have a hold upon our citizens, both in public and in private life, which is as much one of the ennobling institutions of our happy country as——"

"As nigger slavery itself," suggested Mr. Brick.

"En—tirely so," remarked the colonel.

"Pray," said Martin, after some hesitation, "may I venture to ask, with reference to a case I observe in this paper of yours, whether the Popular Instructor often deals in—I am at a loss to express it without giving you offence—in forgery? In forged letters, for instance," he

pursued, for the colonel was perfectly calm and quite at his ease, "solemnly purporting to have been written at recent periods by living men?"

"Well, sir!" replied the colonel. "It does, now and then."

"And the popular instructed—what do they do?" asked Martin.

"Buy 'em!" said the colonel.

Mr. Jefferson Brick expectorated and laughed; the former copiously, the latter approvingly.

"Buy 'em by hundreds of thousands," resumed the colonel. "We are a smart people here, and can appreciate smartness."

"Is smartness American for forgery?" asked Martin.

"Well!" said the colonel, "I expect it's American for a good many things that you call by other names. But you can't help yourselves in Europe. We can."

"And do, sometimes," thought Martin. "You help yourselves with very little ceremony, too!"

"At all events, whatever name we choose to employ," said the colonel, stooping down to roll the third empty bottle into a corner after the other two, "I suppose the art of forgery was not invented here, sir?"

"I suppose not," replied Martin.

"Nor any other kind of smartness, I reckon?"

"Invented! No, I presume not."

"Well!" said the colonel; "then we got it all from the old country, and the old country's to blame for it, and not the new 'un. There's an end of *that*. Now, if Mr. Jefferson Brick and you will be so good as clear, I'll come out last, and lock the door."

Rightly interpreting this as the signal for their departure, Martin walked down-stairs after the war correspondent, who preceded him with great majesty. The colonel following, they left the Rowdy Journal Office and walked forth into the streets: Martin feeling doubtful whether he ought to kick the colonel for having presumed to speak to him, or whether it came within the bounds of possibility that he and his establishment could be among the boasted usages of that regenerated land.

It was clear that Colonel Diver, in the security of his strong position, and in his perfect understanding of the public sentiment, cared very little what Martin or anybody else thought about him. His high-spiced wares were made to sell, and they sold; and his thousands of readers could as rationally charge their delight in filth upon him, as a glutton can shift upon his cook the responsibility of his beastly excess. Nothing would have delighted the colonel more than to be told that no such

man as he could walk in high success the streets of any other country in the world: for that would only have been a logical assurance to him of the correct adaptation of his labours to the prevailing taste, and of his being strictly and peculiarly a national feature of America.

They walked a mile or more along a handsome street which the colonel said was called Broadway, and which Mr. Jefferson Brick said "whipped the universe." Turning, at length, into one of the numerous streets which branched from this main thoroughfare, they stopped before a rather mean-looking house with jalousie blinds to every window; a flight of steps before the green street-door; a shining white ornament on the rails on either side like a petrified pine-apple, polished; a little oblong plate of the same material over the knocker, whereon the name of "Pawkins" was engraved; and four accidental pigs looking down the area.

The colonel knocked at this house with the air of a man who lived there; and an Irish girl popped her head out of one of the top windows to see who it was. Pending her journey down-stairs, the pigs were joined by two or three friends from the next street, in company with whom they lay down sociably in the gutter.

"Is the major in-doors?" inquired the colonel, as he entered.

"Is it the master, sir?" returned the girl, with a hesitation which seemed to imply that they were rather flush of majors in that establishment.

"The master!" said Colonel Diver, stopping short and looking round at his war correspondent.

"Oh! The depressing institutions of that British empire, colonel!" said Jefferson Brick. "Master!"

"What's the matter with the word?" asked Martin.

"I should hope it was never heard in our country, sir: that's all," said Jefferson Brick: "except when it is used by some degraded Help, as new to the blessings of our form of government, as this Help is. There are no masters here."

"All 'owners,' are they?" said Martin.

Mr. Jefferson Brick followed in the Rowdy Journal's footsteps without returning any answer. Martin took the same course, thinking as he went, that perhaps the free and independent citizens, who, in their moral elevation, owned the colonel for their master, might render better homage to the goddess, Liberty, in nightly dreams upon the oven of a Russian Serf.

The colonel led the way into a room at the

back of the house upon the ground-floor, light, and of fair dimensions, but exquisitely uncomfortable: having nothing in it but the four cold white walls and ceiling, a mean carpet, a dreary waste of dining-table reaching from end to end, and a bewildering collection of cane-bottomed chairs. In the further region of this banqueting-hall was a stove, garnished on either side with a great brass spittoon, and shaped in itself like three little iron barrels set up on end in a fender, and joined together on the principle of the Siamese Twins. Before it, swinging him-

self in a rocking-chair, lounged a large gentleman with his hat on, who amused himself by spitting alternately into the spittoon on the right hand of the stove, and the spittoon on the left, and then working his way back again in the same order. A negro lad in a soiled white jacket was busily engaged in placing on the table two long rows of knives and forks, relieved at intervals by jugs of water; and as he travelled down one side of this festive board, he straightened with his dirty hands the dirtier cloth, which was all askew, and had not been



"YOU'RE THE PLEASANTEST FELLOW I HAVE SEEN YET," SAID MARTIN, CLAPPING HIM ON THE BACK,
 "AND GIVE ME A BETTER APPETITE THAN BITTERS."

removed since breakfast. The atmosphere of this room was rendered intensely hot and stifling by the stove; but being further flavoured by a sickly gush of soup from the kitchen, and by such remote suggestions of tobacco as lingered within the brazen receptacles already mentioned, it became, to a stranger's senses, almost insupportable.

The gentleman in the rocking-chair having his back towards them, and being much engaged in his intellectual pastime, was not aware of their approach until the colonel walking up to the stove, contributed his mite towards the

support of the left-hand spittoon, just as the major—for it was the major—bore down upon it. Major Pawkins then reserved his fire, and looking upwards, said, with a peculiar air of quiet weariness, like a man who had been up all night—an air which Martin had already observed both in the colonel and Mr. Jefferson Brick—

"Well, colonel!"

"Here is a gentleman from England, major," the colonel replied, "who has concluded to locate himself here if the amount of compensation suits him."

"I am glad to see you, sir," observed the major, shaking hands with Martin, and not moving a muscle of his face. "You are pretty bright, I hope?"

"Never better," said Martin.

"You are never likely to be," returned the major. "You will see the sun shine *here*."

"I think I remember to have seen it shine at home, sometimes," said Martin, smiling.

"I think not," replied the major. He said so with a stoical indifference certainly, but still in a tone of firmness which admitted of no further dispute on that point. When he had thus settled the question, he put his hat a little on one side for the greater convenience of scratching his head, and saluted Mr. Jefferson Brick with a lazy nod.

Major Pawkins (a gentleman of Pennsylvanian origin) was distinguished by a very large skull, and a great mass of yellow forehead; in deference to which commodities, it was currently held in bar-rooms and other such places of resort, that the major was a man of huge sagacity. He was further to be known by a heavy eye and a dull slow manner; and for being a man of that kind who—mentally speaking—requires a deal of room to turn himself in. But, in trading on his stock of wisdom, he invariably proceeded on the principle of putting all the goods he had (and more) into his window; and that went a great way with his constituency of admirers. It went a great way, perhaps, with Mr. Jefferson Brick, who took occasion to whisper in Martin's ear:

"One of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

It must not be supposed, however, that the perpetual exhibition in the market-place of all his stock-in-trade for sale or hire was the major's sole claim to a very large share of sympathy and support. He was a great politician; and the one article of his creed, in reference to all public obligations involving the good faith and integrity of his country, was, "run a moist pen slick through everything, and start fresh." This made him a patriot. In commercial affairs he was a bold speculator. In plainer words, he had a most distinguished genius for swindling, and could start a bank, or negotiate a loan, or form a land-jobbing company (entailing ruin, pestilence, and death, on hundreds of families), with any gifted creature in the Union. This made him an admirable man of business. He could hang about a bar-room discussing the affairs of the nation, for twelve hours together; and in that time could hold forth with more intolerable dulness, chew more tobacco, smoke more to-

bacco, drink more rum-toddy, mint-julep, ginsling, and cock-tail, than any private gentleman of his acquaintance. This made him an orator and a man of the people. In a word, the major was a rising character, and a popular character, and was in a fair way to be sent by the popular party to the State House of New York, if not in the end to Washington itself. But as a man's private prosperity does not always keep pace with his patriotic devotion to public affairs; and as fraudulent transactions have their downs as well as ups; the major was occasionally under a cloud. Hence, just now, Mrs. Pawkins kept a boarding-house, and Major Pawkins rather "loafed" his time away, than otherwise.

"You have come to visit our country, sir, at a season of great commercial depression," said the major.

"At an alarming crisis," said the colonel.

"At a period of unprecedented stagnation," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"I am sorry to hear that," returned Martin. "It's not likely to last, I hope?"

Martin knew nothing about America, or he would have known perfectly well that if its individual citizens, to a man, are to be believed, it always *is* depressed, and always *is* stagnated, and always *is* at an alarming crisis, and never was otherwise; though as a body they are ready to make oath upon the Evangelists at any hour of the day or night, that it is the most thriving and prosperous of all countries on the habitable globe.

"It is not likely to last, I hope?" said Martin.

"Well!" returned the major, "I expect we shall get along somehow, and come right in the end."

"We are an elastic country," said the Rowdy Journal.

"We are a young lion," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"We have revivifying and vigorous principles within ourselves," observed the major. "Shall we drink a bitter afore dinner, colonel?"

The colonel assenting to this proposal with great alacrity, Major Pawkins proposed an adjournment to a neighbouring bar-room, which, as he observed, was "only in the next block." He then referred Martin to Mrs. Pawkins for all particulars connected with the rate of board and lodging, and informed him that he would have the pleasure of seeing that lady at dinner, which would soon be ready, as the dinner hour was two o'clock, and it only wanted a quarter now. This reminded him that if the bitter were to be taken at all, there was no time to lose; so he

walked off without more ado, and left them to follow if they thought proper.

When the major rose from his rocking-chair before the stove, and so disturbed the hot air and balmy whiff of soup which fanned their brows, the odour of stale tobacco became so decidedly prevalent, as to leave no doubt of its proceeding mainly from that gentleman's attire. Indeed, as Martin walked behind him to the bar-room, he could not help thinking that the great square major, in his listlessness and languor, looked very much like a stale weed himself: such as might be hoed out of the public garden, with great advantage to the decent growth of that preserve, and tossed on some congenial dunghill.

They encountered more weeds in the bar-room, some of whom (being thirsty souls as well as dirty) were pretty stale in one sense and pretty fresh in another. Among them was a gentleman who, as Martin gathered from the conversation that took place over the bitter, started that afternoon for the Far West on a six months' business tour; and who, as his outfit and equipment for this journey, had just such another shiny hat and just such another little pale valise, as had composed the luggage of the gentleman who came from England in the *Screw*.

They were walking back very leisurely; Martin arm-in-arm with Mr. Jefferson Brick, and the major and the colonel side-by-side before them; when, as they came within a house or two of the major's residence, they heard a bell ringing violently. The instant this sound struck upon their ears, the colonel and the major darted off, dashed up the steps and in at the street-door (which stood ajar) like lunatics; while Mr. Jefferson Brick, detaching his arm from Martin's, made a precipitate dive in the same direction, and vanished also.

"Good Heaven!" thought Martin, "the premises are on fire! it was an alarm-bell!"

But there was no smoke to be seen, nor any flame, nor was there any smell of fire. As Martin faltered on the pavement, three more gentlemen, with horror and agitation depicted in their faces, came plunging wildly round the street corner; jostled each other on the steps; struggled for an instant; and rushed into the house, in a confused heap of arms and legs. Unable to bear it any longer, Martin followed. Even in his rapid progress, he was run down, thrust aside, and passed, by two more gentlemen, stark mad, as it appeared, with fierce excitement.

"Where is it?" cried Martin, breathlessly,

to a negro whom he encountered in the passage.

"In a eatin room sa. 'Kernel sa, him kep a seat 'side himself sa."

"A seat!" cried Martin.

"For a dinnar sa."

Martin stared at him for a moment, and burst into a hearty laugh; to which the negro, out of his natural good humour and desire to please, so heartily responded, that his teeth shone like a gleam of light. "You're the pleasantest fellow I have seen yet," said Martin, clapping him on the back, "and give me a better appetite than bitters."

With this sentiment he walked into the dining-room and slipped into a chair next the colonel, which that gentleman (by this time nearly through his dinner) had turned down, in reserve for him, with its back against the table.

It was a numerous company—eighteen or twenty, perhaps. Of these some five or six were ladies, who sat wedged together in a little phalanx by themselves. All the knives and forks were working away at a rate that was quite alarming; very few words were spoken; and everybody seemed to eat his utmost in self-defence, as if a famine were expected to set in before breakfast time to-morrow morning, and it had become high time to assert the first law of nature. The poultry, which may perhaps be considered to have formed the staple of the entertainment—for there was a turkey at the top, a pair of ducks at the bottom, and two fowls in the middle—disappeared as rapidly as if every bird had had the use of its wings, and had flown in desperation down a human throat. The oysters, stewed and pickled, leaped from their capacious reservoirs, and slid by scores into the mouths of the assembly. The sharpest pickles vanished, whole cucumbers at once, like sugar-plums, and no man winked his eye. Great heaps of indigestible matter melted away as ice before the sun. It was a solemn and an awful thing to see. Dyspeptic individuals bolted their food in wedges; feeding, not themselves, but broods of nightmares, who were continually standing at livery within them. Spare men, with lank and rigid cheeks, came out unsatisfied from the destruction of heavy dishes, and glared with watchful eyes upon the pastry. What Mrs. Pawkins felt each day at dinner-time is hidden from all human knowledge. But she had one comfort. It was very soon over.

When the colonel had finished his dinner, which event took place while Martin, who had sent his plate for some turkey, was waiting to begin, he asked him what he thought of the

boarders, who were from all parts of the Union, and whether he would like to know any particulars concerning them.

"Pray," said Martin, "who is that sickly little girl opposite, with the tight round eyes? I don't see anybody here, who looks like her mother, or who seems to have charge of her."

"Do you mean the matron in blue, sir?" asked the colonel, with emphasis. "That is Mrs. Jefferson Brick, sir."

"No, no," said Martin, "I mean the little girl, like a doll—directly opposite."

"Well, sir!" cried the colonel. "That is Mrs. Jefferson Brick."

Martin glanced at the colonel's face, but he was quite serious.

"Bless my soul! I suppose there will be a young Brick then, one of these days?" said Martin.

"There are two young Bricks already, sir," returned the colonel.

The matron looked so uncommonly like a child herself, that Martin could not help saying as much. "Yes, sir," returned the colonel, "but some institutions develop human nature: others retard it."

"Jefferson Brick," he observed after a short silence, in commendation of his correspondent, "is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

This had passed almost in a whisper, for the distinguished gentleman alluded to, sat on Martin's other hand.

"Pray, Mr. Brick," said Martin turning to him, and asking a question more for conversation's sake than from any feeling of interest in its subject, "who is that?" he was going to say "young" but thought it prudent to eschew the word: "that very short gentleman yonder, with the red nose?"

"That is Pro—fessor Mullit, sir," replied Jefferson.

"May I ask what he is Professor of?" asked Martin.

"Of education, sir," said Jefferson Brick.

"A sort of schoolmaster, possibly?" Martin ventured to observe.

"He is a man of fine moral elements, sir, and not commonly endowed," said the war correspondent. "He felt it necessary, at the last election for President, to repudiate and denounce his father, who voted on the wrong interest. He has since written some powerful pamphlets, under the signature of 'Suturb,' or Brutus reversed. He is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir."

"There seem to be plenty of 'em," thought Martin, "at any rate."

Pursuing his inquiries, Martin found that there were no fewer than four majors present, two colonels, one general, and a captain, so that he could not help thinking how strongly officered the American militia must be; and wondering very much whether the officers commanded each other; or if they did not, where on earth the privates came from. There seemed to be no man there without a title: for those who had not attained to military honours were either doctors, professors, or reverends. Three very hard and disagreeable gentlemen were on missions from neighbouring States; one on monetary affairs, one on political, one on sectarian. Among the ladies, there were Mrs. Pawkins, who was very straight, bony, and silent; and a wiry-faced old damsel, who had strong sentiments touching the rights of women, and had diffused the same in lectures; but the rest were strangely devoid of individual traits of character, insomuch that any one of them might have changed minds with the other, and nobody would have found it out. These, by the way, were the only members of the party who did not appear to be among the most remarkable people in the country.

Several of the gentlemen got up, one by one, and walked off as they swallowed their last morsel; pausing generally by the stove for a minute or so to refresh themselves at the brass spittoons. A few sedentary characters, however, remained at table full a quarter of an hour, and did not rise until the ladies rose, when all stood up.

"Where are they going?" asked Martin, in the ear of Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"To their bed-rooms, sir."

"Is there no dessert, or other interval of conversation?" asked Martin, who was disposed to enjoy himself after his long voyage.

"We are a busy people here, sir, and have no time for that," was the reply.

So the ladies passed out in single file; Mr. Jefferson Brick and such other married gentlemen as were left, acknowledging the departure of their other halves by a nod; and there was an end of *them*. Martin thought this an uncomfortable custom, but he kept his opinion to himself for the present, being anxious to hear, and inform himself by, the conversation of the busy gentlemen, who now lounged about the stove, as if a great weight had been taken off their minds by the withdrawal of the other sex; and who made a plentiful use of the spittoons and their toothpicks.

It was rather barren of interest, to say the truth; and the greater part of it may be summed

up in one word—dollars. All their cares, hopes, joys, affections, virtues, and associations, seemed to be melted down into dollars. Whatever the chance contributions that fell into the slow cauldron of their talk, they made the gruel thick and slab with dollars. Men were weighed by their dollars, measures gauged by their dollars; life was auctioneered, appraised, put up, and knocked down for its dollars. The next respectable thing to dollars was any venture having their attainment for its end. The more of that worthless ballast, honour and fair-dealing, which any man cast overboard from the ship of his Good Name and Good Intent, the more ample stowage-room he had for dollars. Make commerce one huge lie and mighty theft. Deface the banner of the nation for an idle rag; pollute it star by star; and cut out stripe by stripe as from the arm of a degraded soldier. Do anything for dollars! What is a flag to *them*!

One who rides at all hazards of limb and life in the chase of a fox, will prefer to ride recklessly at most times. So it was with these gentlemen. He was the greatest patriot, in their eyes, who brawled the loudest, and who cared the least for decency. He was their champion, who in the brutal fury of his own pursuit, could cast no stigma upon them, for the hot knavery of theirs. Thus, Martin learned in the five minutes' straggling talk about the stove, that to carry pistols into legislative assemblies, and swords in sticks, and other such peaceful toys; to seize opponents by the throat, as dogs or rats might do; to bluster, bully, and overbear by personal assailment: were glowing deeds. Not thrusts and stabs at Freedom, striking far deeper into her House of Life than any sultan's scimitar could reach; but rare incense on her altars, having a grateful scent in patriotic nostrils, and curling upward to the seventh heaven of Fame.

Once or twice, when there was a pause, Martin asked such questions as naturally occurred to him, being a stranger, about the national poets, the theatre, literature, and the arts. But the information which these gentlemen were in a condition to give him on such topics, did not extend beyond the effusions of such master-spirits of the time, as Colonel Diver, Mr. Jefferson Brick, and others; renowned, as it appeared, for excellence in the achievement of a peculiar style of broadside-essay called "a screamer."

"We are a busy people, sir," said one of the captains, who was from the West, "and have no time for reading mere notions. We don't mind 'em if they come to us in newspapers along

with almighty strong stuff of another sort, but darn your books."

Here the general, who appeared to grow quite faint at the bare thought of reading anything which was neither mercantile nor political, and was not in a newspaper, inquired "if any gentleman would drink some?" Most of the company, considering this a very choice and seasonable idea, lounged out, one by one, to the bar-room in the next block. Thence they probably went to their stores and counting-houses; thence to the bar-room again, to talk once more of dollars, and enlarge their minds with the perusal and discussion of screamers; and thence each man to snore in the bosom of his own family.

"Which would seem," said Martin, pursuing the current of his own thoughts, "to be the principal recreation they enjoy in common." With that, he fell a-musing again on dollars, demagogues, and bar-rooms; debating within himself whether busy people of this class were really as busy as they claimed to be, or only had an inaptitude for social and domestic pleasure.

It was a difficult question to solve; and the mere fact of its being strongly presented to his mind by all that he had seen and heard, was not encouraging. He sat down at the deserted board, and becoming more and more despondent, as he thought of all the uncertainties and difficulties of his precarious situation, sighed heavily.

Now, there had been at the dinner-table a middle-aged man with a dark eye and a sun-burnt face, who had attracted Martin's attention by having something very engaging and honest in the expression of his features; but of whom he could learn nothing from either of his neighbours, who seemed to consider him quite beneath their notice. He had taken no part in the conversation round the stove, nor had he gone forth with the rest; and now, when he heard Martin sigh for the third or fourth time, he interposed with some casual remark, as if he desired, without obtruding himself upon a stranger's notice, to engage him in cheerful conversation if he could. His motive was so obvious, and yet so delicately expressed, that Martin felt really grateful to him, and showed him so, in the manner of his reply.

"I will not ask you," said this gentleman with a smile, as he rose and moved towards him, "how you like my country, for I can quite anticipate your feeling on that point. But, as I am an American, and consequently bound to begin with a question, I'll ask you how you like the colonel?"

"You are so very frank," returned Martin, "that I have no hesitation in saying I don't like him at all. Though I must add that I am beholden to him for his civility in bringing me here—and arranging for my stay, on pretty reasonable terms, by the way," he added: remembering that the colonel had whispered him to that effect, before going out.

"Not much beholden," said the stranger drily. "The colonel occasionally boards packet-ships, I have heard, to glean the latest information for his journal; and he occasionally brings strangers to board here, I believe, with a view to the little percentage which attaches to those good offices; and which the hostess deducts from his weekly bill. I don't offend you, I hope?" he added, seeing that Martin reddened.

"My dear sir," returned Martin, as they shook hands, "how is that possible! to tell you the truth, I—am—"

"Yes?" said the gentleman, sitting down beside him.

"I am rather at a loss, since I must speak plainly," said Martin, getting the better of his hesitation, "to know how this colonel escapes being beaten."

"Well! He has been beaten once or twice," remarked the gentleman quietly. "He is one of a class of men, in whom our own Franklin, so long ago as ten years before the close of the last century, foresaw our danger and disgrace. Perhaps you don't know that Franklin, in very severe terms, published his opinion that those who were slandered by such fellows as this colonel, having no sufficient remedy in the administration of this country's laws or in the decent and right-minded feeling of its people, were justified in retorting on such public nuisances by means of a stout cudgel?"

"I was not aware of that," said Martin, "but I am very glad to know it, and I think it worthy of his memory; especially"—here he hesitated again.

"Go on," said the other, smiling, as if he knew what stuck in Martin's throat.

"Especially," pursued Martin, "as I can already understand that it may have required great courage, even in his time, to write freely on any question which was not a party one in this very free country."

"Some courage, no doubt," returned his new friend. "Do you think it would require any to do so, now?"

"Indeed I think it would; and not a little," said Martin.

"You are right. So very right, that I believe no satirist could breathe this air. If another

Juvenal or Swift could rise up among us to-morrow, he would be hunted down. If you have any knowledge of our literature, and can give me the name of any man, American born and bred, who has anatomised our follies as a people, and not as this or that party; and has escaped the foulest and most brutal slander, the most inveterate hatred and intolerant pursuit; it will be a strange name in my ears, believe me. In some cases I could name to you, where a native writer has ventured on the most harmless and good-humoured illustrations of our vices or defects, it has been found necessary to announce, that in a second edition the passage has been expunged, or altered, or explained away, or patched into praise."

"And how has this been brought about?" asked Martin, in dismay.

"Think of what you have seen and heard to-day, beginning with the colonel," said his friend, "and ask yourself. How *they* came about is another question. Heaven forbid that they should be samples of the intelligence and virtue of America, but they come uppermost and in great numbers too, and too often represent it. Will you walk?"

There was a cordial candour in his manner, and an engaging confidence that it would not be abused; a manly bearing on his own part, and a simple reliance on the manly faith of a stranger; which Martin had never seen before. He linked his arm readily in that of the American gentleman, and they walked out together.

It was perhaps to men like this, his new companion, that a traveller of honoured name, who trod those shores now nearly forty years ago, and woke upon that soil, as many have done since, to blots and stains upon its high pretensions, which in the brightness of his distant dreams were lost to view, appealed in these words—

"Oh but for such, Columbia's days were done;
Rank without ripeness, quickened without sun,
Crude at the surface, rotten at the core,
Her fruits would fall before her spring were o'er!"

CHAPTER XVII.

MARTIN ENLARGES HIS CIRCLE OF ACQUAINTANCE; INCREASES HIS STOCK OF WISDOM; AND HAS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY OF COMPARING HIS OWN EXPERIENCES WITH THOSE OF LUMMY NED OF THE LIGHT SALISBURY, AS RELATED BY HIS FRIEND MR. WILLIAM SIMMONS.

IT was characteristic of Martin, that all this while he had either forgotten Mark Tapley as completely as if there had been no such

person in existence, or, if for a moment the figure of that gentleman rose before his mental vision, had dismissed it as something by no means of a pressing nature, which might be attended to by-and-by, and could wait his perfect leisure. But, being now in the streets again, it occurred to him as just coming within the bare limits of possibility that Mr. Tapley might, in course of time, grow tired of waiting on the threshold of the Rowdy Journal Office, so he intimated to his new friend, that if they could conveniently walk in that direction, he would be glad to get this piece of business off his mind.

"And speaking of business," said Martin, "may I ask, in order that I may not be behind-hand with questions either, whether your occupation holds you to this city, or, like myself, you are a visitor here?"

"A visitor," replied his friend. "I was 'raised' in the State of Massachusetts, and reside there still. My home is in a quiet country town. I am not often in these busy places; and my inclination to visit them does not increase with our better acquaintance, I assure you."

"You have been abroad?" asked Martin.

"Oh yes."

"And, like most people who travel, have become more than ever attached to your home and native country," said Martin, eyeing him curiously.

"To my home—yes," rejoined his friend. "To my native country *as* my home—yes, also."

"You imply some reservation," said Martin.

"Well," returned his new friend, "if you ask me whether I came back here with a greater relish for my country's faults; with a greater fondness for those who claim (at the rate of so many dollars a day) to be her friends; with a cooler indifference to the growth of principles among us in respect of public matters and of private dealings between man and man, the advocacy of which, beyond the foul atmosphere of a criminal trial, would disgrace your own Old Bailey lawyers; why, then I answer plainly, No."

"Oh!" said Martin, in so exactly the same key as his friend's No, that it sounded like an echo.

"If you ask me," his companion pursued, "whether I came back here better satisfied with a state of things which broadly divides society into two classes—whereof one, the great mass, asserts a spurious independence, most miserably dependent for its mean existence on the disregard of humanising conventionalities of manner and social custom, so that the coarser a man is,

the more distinctly it shall appeal to his taste; while the other, disgusted with the low standard thus set up and made adaptable to everything, takes refuge among the graces and refinements it can bring to bear on private life, and leaves the public weal to such fortune as may betide it in the press and uproar of a general scramble—then again I answer, No."

And again Martin said "Oh!" in the same odd way as before, being anxious and disconcerted; not so much, to say the truth, on public grounds, as with reference to the fading prospects of domestic architecture.

"In a word," resumed the other, "I do not find and cannot believe, and therefore will not allow that we are a model of wisdom, and an example to the world, and the perfection of human reason, and a great deal more to the same purpose, which you may hear any hour in the day; simply because we began our political life with two inestimable advantages."

"What were they?" asked Martin.

"One, that our history commenced at so late a period as to escape the ages of bloodshed and cruelty through which other nations have passed; and so had all the light of their probation, and none of its darkness. The other, that we have a vast territory, and not—as yet—too many people on it. These facts considered, we have done little enough, I think."

"Education?" suggested Martin, faintly.

"Pretty well on that head," said the other, shrugging his shoulders, "still no mighty matter to boast of; for old countries, and despotic countries too, have done as much, if not more, and made less noise about it. We shine out brightly in comparison with England, certainly, but hers is a very extreme case. You complimented me on my frankness, you know," he added, laughing.

"Oh! I am not at all astonished at your speaking thus openly when my country is in question," returned Martin. "It is your plain-speaking in reference to your own that surprises me."

"You will not find it a scarce quality here, I assure you, saving among the Colonel Divers, and Jefferson Bricks, and Major Pawkinses—though the best of us are something like the man in Goldsmith's comedy, who wouldn't suffer anybody but himself to abuse his master. Come!" he added, "let us talk of something else. You have come here on some design of improving your fortune, I dare say; and I should grieve to put you out of heart. I am some years older than you, besides; and may, on a few trivial points, advise you, perhaps."

There was not the least curiosity or impertinence in the manner of this offer, which was open-hearted, unaffected, and good-natured. As it was next to impossible that he should not have his confidence awakened by a deportment so prepossessing and kind, Martin plainly stated what had brought him into those parts, and even made the very difficult avowal that he was poor. He did not say how poor, it must be admitted, rather throwing off the declaration with an air which might have implied that he had money enough for six months, instead of as many weeks; but poor he said he was, and grateful he said he would be, for any counsel that his friend would give him.

It would not have been very difficult for any one to see; but it was particularly easy for Martin, whose perceptions were sharpened by his circumstances, to discern; that the stranger's face grew infinitely longer as the domestic-architecture project was developed. Nor, although he made a great effort to be as encouraging as possible, could he prevent his head from shaking once involuntarily, as if it said in the vulgar tongue, upon its own account, "No go!" But he spoke in a cheerful tone, and said, that although there was no such opening as Martin wished, in that city, he would make it matter of immediate consideration and inquiry where one was most likely to exist; and then he made Martin acquainted with his name, which was Bevan; and with his profession, which was phisic, though he seldom or never practised; and with other circumstances connected with himself and family, which fully occupied the time, until they reached the Rowdy Journal Office.

Mr. Tapley appeared to be taking his ease on the landing of the first-floor; for sounds as of some gentleman established in that region, whistling "Rule Britannia" with all his might and main, greeted their ears before they reached the house. On ascending to the spot from whence this music proceeded, they found him recumbent in the midst of a fortification of luggage, apparently performing his national anthem for the gratification of a grey-haired black man, who sat on one of the outworks (a portmanteau), staring intently at Mark, while Mark, with his head reclining on his hand, returned the compliment in a thoughtful manner, and whistled all the time. He seemed to have recently dined, for his knife, a case-bottle, and certain broken meats in a handkerchief, lay near at hand. He had employed a portion of his leisure in the decoration of the Rowdy Journal door, whereon his own initials now appeared in letters nearly half a foot long, together with the

day of the month in smaller type: the whole surrounded by an ornamental border, and looking very fresh and bold.

"I was a'most afraid you was lost, sir!" cried Mark, rising, and stopping the tune at that point where Britons generally are supposed to declare (when it is whistled) that they never, never, never,—

"Nothing gone wrong, I hope, sir?"

"No, Mark. Where's your friend?"

"The mad woman, sir?" said Mr. Tapley.

"Oh! she's all right, sir."

"Did she find her husband?"

"Yes, sir. Least ways she's found his remains," said Mark, correcting himself.

"The man's not dead, I hope?"

"Not altogether dead, sir," returned Mark; "but he's had more fevers and agues than is quite reconcilable with being alive. When she didn't see him a waiting for her, I thought she'd have died herself, I did!"

"Was he not here, then!"

"*He* wasn't here. There was a feeble old shadow come a creeping down at last, as much like his substance when she know'd him, as your shadow when it's drawn out to its very finest and longest by the sun, is like you. But it was his remains, there's no doubt about that. She took on with joy, poor thing, as much as if it had been all of him!"

"Had he bought land?" asked Mr. Bevan.

"Ah! He'd bought land," said Mark, shaking his head, "and paid for it too. Every sort of nateral advantage was connected with it, the agents said; and there certainly was *one*, quite unlimited. No end to the water!"

"It's a thing he couldn't have done without, I suppose," observed Martin, peevishly.

"Certainly not, sir. There it was, any way; always turned on, and no water-rate. Independent of three or four slimy old rivers close by, it varied on the farm from four to six foot deep in the dry season. He couldn't say how deep it was in the rainy time, for he never had anything long enough to sound it with."

"Is this true?" asked Martin of his companion.

"Extremely probable," he answered. "Some Mississippi or Missouri lot, I dare say."

"However," pursued Mark, "he came from I-don't-know-where-and-all, down to New York here, to meet his wife and children; and they started off again in a steamboat this blessed afternoon, as happy to be along with each other, as if they were going to Heaven. I should think they was, pretty straight, if I may judge from the poor man's looks."

"And may I ask," said Martin, glancing, but not with any displeasure, from Mark to the negro, "who this gentleman is? Another friend of yours?"

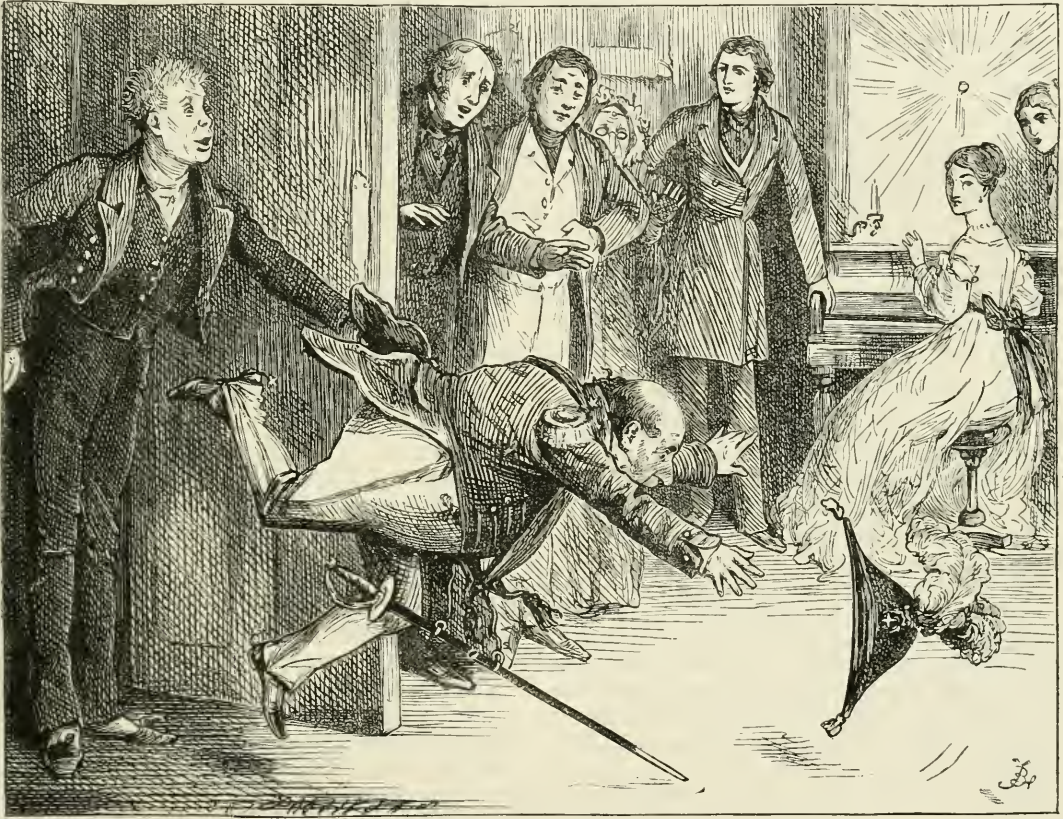
"Why, sir," returned Mark, taking him aside, and speaking confidentially in his ear, "he's a man of colour, sir."

"Do you take me for a blind man," asked Martin, somewhat impatiently, "that you think it necessary to tell me that, when his face is the blackest that ever was seen?"

"No, no; when I say a man of colour," returned Mark, "I mean that he's been one of them as there's picters of in the shops. A man and a brother, you know, sir," said Mr. Tapley, favouring his master with a significant indication of the figure so often represented in tracts and cheap prints.

"A slave!" cried Martin, in a whisper.

"Ah!" said Mark in the same tone. "Nothing else. A slave. Why, when that there man was young—don't look at him, while I'm a



"JINIRAL FLADDOCK!"

telling it—he was shot in the leg; gashed in the arm; scored in his live limbs, like crimped fish; beaten out of shape; had his neck galled with an iron collar, and wore iron rings upon his wrists and ankles. The marks are on him to this day. When I was having my dinner just now, he stripped off his coat, and took away my appetite."

"Is *this* true?" asked Martin of his friend, who stood beside them.

"I have no reason to doubt it," he answered, shaking his head. "It very often is."

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 10.

"Bless you," said Mark, "I know it is, from hearing his whole story. That master died; so did his second master from having his head cut open with a hatchet by another slave, who, when he'd done it, went and drowned himself: then he got a better one: in years and years he saved up a little money, and bought his freedom, which he got pretty cheap at last, on account of his strength being nearly gone, and he being ill. Then he come here. And now he's a saving up to treat himself, afore he dies, to one small

purchase—it's nothing to speak of: only his own daughter; that's all!" cried Mr. Tapley, becoming excited. "Liberty for ever! Hurrah! Hail, Columbia!"

"Hush!" cried Martin, clapping his hand upon his mouth: "and don't be an idiot. What is he doing here?"

"Waiting to take our luggage off upon a truck," said Mark. "He'd have come for it by-and-by, but I engaged him for a very reasonable charge—out of my own pocket—to sit along with me and make me jolly; and I *am* jolly; and if I was rich enough to contract with him to wait upon me once a day, to be looked at, I'd never be anything else."

The fact may cause a solemn impeachment of Mark's veracity, but it must be admitted nevertheless, that there was that in his face and manner at the moment, which militated strongly against this emphatic declaration of his state of mind.

"Lord love you, sir," he added, "they're so fond of Liberty in this part of the globe, that they buy her and sell her and carry her to market with 'em. They've such a passion for Liberty, that they can't help taking liberties with her. That's what it's owing to."

"Very well," said Martin, wishing to change the theme. "Having come to that conclusion, Mark, perhaps you'll attend to me. The place to which the luggage is to go, is printed on this card. Mrs. Pawkins's Boarding House."

"Mrs. Pawkins's boarding-house," repeated Mark. "Now, Cicero."

"Is that his name?" asked Martin.

"That's his name, sir," rejoined Mark. And the negro grinning assent from under a leathern portmanteau, than which his own face was many shades deeper, hobbled down-stairs with his portion of their worldly goods: Mark Tapley having already gone before with his share.

Martin and his friend followed them to the door below, and were about to pursue their walk, when the latter stopped, and asked, with some hesitation, whether that young man was to be trusted.

"Mark! Oh certainly! with anything."

"You don't understand me,—I think he had better go with us. He is an honest fellow, and speaks his mind so very plainly."

"Why, the fact is," said Martin, smiling, "that being unaccustomed to a free republic, he is used to do so."

"I think he had better go with us," returned the other. "He may get into some trouble otherwise. This is not a slave State; but I am

ashamed to say that a spirit of Tolerance is not so common anywhere in these latitudes as the form. We are not remarkable for behaving very temperately to each other when we differ: but to strangers! no, I really think he had better go with us."

Martin called to him immediately to be of their party; so Cicero and the truck went one way, and they three went another.

They walked about the city for two or three hours; seeing it from the best points of view, and pausing in the principal streets, and before such public buildings as Mr. Bevan pointed out. Night then coming on apace, Martin proposed that they should adjourn to Mrs. Pawkins's establishment for coffee; but in this he was overruled by his new acquaintance, who seemed to have set his heart on carrying him, though it were only for an hour, to the house of a friend of his who lived hard by. Feeling (however disinclined he was, being weary) that it would be in bad taste, and not very gracious, to object that he was unintroduced, when this open-hearted gentleman was so ready to be his sponsor, Martin—for once in his life, at all events—sacrificed his own will and pleasure to the wishes of another, and consented with a fair grace. So, travelling had done him that much good, already.

Mr. Bevan knocked at the door of a very neat house of moderate size, from the parlour windows of which, lights were shining brightly into the now dark street. It was quickly opened by a man with such a thoroughly Irish face, that it seemed as if he ought, as a matter of right and principle, to be in rags, and could have no sort of business to be looking cheerfully at anybody out of a whole suit of clothes.

Commending Mark to the care of this phenomenon—for such he may be said to have been in Martin's eyes—Mr. Bevan led the way into the room which had shed its cheerfulness upon the street, to whose occupants he introduced Mr. Chuzzlewit as a gentleman from England, whose acquaintance he had recently had the pleasure to make. They gave him welcome in all courtesy and politeness; and in less than five minutes' time he found himself sitting very much at his ease, by the fireside, and becoming vastly well acquainted with the whole family.

There were two young ladies—one eighteen; the other twenty—both very slender, but very pretty; their mother, who looked, as Martin thought, much older and more faded than she ought to have looked; and their grandmother, a little sharp-eyed, quick old woman, who seemed

to have got past that stage, and to have come all right again. Besides these, there were the young ladies' father, and the young ladies' brother; the first engaged in mercantile affairs; the second, a student at college—both, in a certain cordiality of manner, like his own friend; and not unlike him in face, which was no great wonder, for it soon appeared that he was their near relation. Martin could not help tracing the family pedigree from the two young ladies, because they were foremost in his thoughts; not only from being, as aforesaid, very pretty, but by reason of their wearing miraculously small shoes, and the thinnest possible silk stockings: the which their rocking-chairs developed to a distracting extent.

There is no doubt that it was a monstrous comfortable circumstance to be sitting in a snug well-furnished room, warmed by a cheerful fire, and full of various pleasant decorations, including four small shoes, and the like amount of silk stockings, and—yes, why not?—the feet and legs therein enshrined. And there is no doubt that Martin was monstrous well-disposed to regard his position in that light, after his recent experience of the Screw, and of Mrs. Pawkins's boarding-house. The consequence was, that he made himself very agreeable indeed; and by the time the tea and coffee arrived (with sweet preserves, and cunning tea-cakes in its train), was in a highly genial state, and much esteemed by the whole family.

Another delightful circumstance turned up before the first cup of tea was drunk. The whole family had been in England. There was a pleasant thing! But Martin was not quite so glad of this, when he found that they knew all the great dukes, lords, viscounts, marquesses, duchesses, knights, and baronets, quite affectionately, and were beyond everything interested in the least particular concerning them. However, when they asked after the wearer of this or that coronet, and said 'Was he quite well?' Martin answered 'Yes, oh yes. Never better;' and when they said 'his lordship's mother, the duchess, was she much changed?' Martin said, 'Oh dear no, they would know her anywhere, if they saw her to-morrow;' and so got on pretty well. In like manner when the young ladies questioned him touching the Gold Fish in that Grecian fountain in such and such a nobleman's conservatory, and whether there were as many as there used to be, he gravely reported, after mature consideration, that there must be at least twice as many: and as to the exotics, 'Oh! well! it was of no use talking about *them*; they must be seen to be believed;' which improved

state of circumstances reminded the family of the splendour of that brilliant festival (comprehending the whole British Peerage and Court Calendar) to which they were specially invited, and which indeed had been partly given in their honour: and recollections of what Mr. Norris the father had said to the marquess, and of what Mrs. Norris the mother had said to the marchioness, and of what the marquess and marchioness had both said, when they said that upon their words and honours they wished Mr. Norris the father and Mrs. Norris the mother, and the Misses Norris the daughters, and Mr. Norris, Junior, the son, would only take up their permanent residence in England, and give them the pleasure of their everlasting friendship, occupied a very considerable time.

Martin thought it rather strange, and in some sort inconsistent, that during the whole of these narrations, and in the very meridian of their enjoyment thereof, both Mr. Norris the father, and Mr. Norris, Junior, the son (who corresponded, every post, with four members of the English Peerage), enlarged upon the inestimable advantage of having no such arbitrary distinctions in that enlightened land, where there were no noblemen but nature's noblemen, and where all society was based on one broad level of brotherly love and natural equality. Indeed Mr. Norris the father gradually expanding into an oration on this swelling theme was becoming tedious, when Mr. Bevan diverted his thoughts, by happening to make some casual inquiry relative to the occupier of the next house; in reply to which, this same Mr. Norris the father, observed, that "that person entertained religious opinions of which he couldn't approve; and therefore he hadn't the honour of knowing the gentleman." Mrs. Norris the mother added another reason of her own, the same in effect, but varying in words; to wit, that she believed the people were well enough in their way, but they were not genteel.

Another little trait came out, which impressed itself on Martin forcibly. Mr. Bevan told them about Mark and the negro, and then it appeared that all the Norrises were abolitionists. It was a great relief to hear this, and Martin was so much encouraged on finding himself in such company, that he expressed his sympathy with the oppressed and wretched blacks. Now, one of the young ladies—the prettiest and most delicate one—was mightily amused at the earnestness with which he spoke; and on his craving leave to ask her why, was quite unable for a time to speak for laughing. As soon however as she could, she told him that the negroes

were such a funny people; so excessively ludicrous in their manners and appearance: that it was wholly impossible for those who knew them well, to associate any serious ideas with such a very absurd part of the creation. Mr. Norris the father, and Mrs. Norris the mother, and Miss Norris the sister, and Mr. Norris, Junior, the brother, and even Mrs. Norris Senior the grandmother, were all of this opinion, and laid it down as an absolute matter of fact—as if there were nothing in suffering and slavery grim enough to cast a solemn air on any human animal; though it were as ridiculous, physically, as the most grotesque of apes, or, morally, as the mildest Nimrod among tuft-hunting republicans!

“In short,” said Mr. Norris the father, settling the question comfortably, “there is a natural antipathy between the races.”

“Extending,” said Martin’s friend in a low voice, “to the cruellest of tortures, and the bargain and sale of unborn generations.”

Mr. Norris the son said nothing, but he made a wry face, and dusted his fingers as Hamlet might after getting rid of Yorick’s skull: just as though he had that moment touched a negro, and some of the black had come off upon his hands.

In order that their talk might fall again into its former pleasant channel, Martin dropped the subject, with a shrewd suspicion that it would be a dangerous theme to revive under the best of circumstances: and again addressed himself to the young ladies, who were very gorgeously attired in very beautiful colours, and had every article of dress on the same extensive scale as the little shoes and the thin silk stockings. This suggested to him that they were great proficients in the French fashions, which soon turned out to be the case, for though their information appeared to be none of the newest, it was very extensive: and the eldest sister in particular, who was distinguished by a talent for metaphysics, the laws of hydraulic pressure, and the rights of human kind, had a novel way of combining these acquirements and bringing them to bear on any subject from Millinery to the Millennium, both inclusive, which was at once improving and remarkable,—so much so, in short, that it was usually observed to reduce foreigners to a state of temporary insanity in five minutes.

Martin felt his reason going; and as a means of saving himself, besought the other sister (seeing a piano in the room) to sing. With this request she willingly complied; and a bravura concert, solely sustained by the Misses Norris,

presently began. They sang in all languages—except their own. German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swiss; but nothing native; nothing so low as native. For, in this respect, languages are like many other travellers—ordinary and common-place enough at home, but ‘specially genteel abroad.

There is little doubt that in course of time the Misses Norris would have come to Hebrew, if they had not been interrupted by an announcement from the Irishman, who flinging open the door, cried in a loud voice—

“Jiniral Fladdock!”

“My!” cried the sisters, desisting suddenly. “The general come back!”

As they made the exclamation, the general, attired in full uniform for a ball, came darting in with such precipitancy that, hitching his boot in the carpet, and getting his sword between his legs, he came down headlong, and presented a curious little bald place on the crown of his head to the eyes of the astonished company. Nor was this the worst of it; for being rather corpulent and very tight, the general, being down, could not get up again, but lay there, writhing and doing such things with his boots, as there is no other instance of, in military history.

Of course there was an immediate rush to his assistance; and the general was promptly raised. But his uniform was so fearfully and wonderfully made that he came up stiff and without a bend in him, like a dead clown, and had no command whatever of himself until he was put quite flat upon the soles of his feet, when he became animated as by a miracle, and moving edgewise that he might go in a narrower compass and be in less danger of fraying the gold lace on his epaulettes by brushing them against anything, advanced with a smiling visage to salute the lady of the house.

To be sure, it would have been impossible for the family to testify purer delight and joy than at this unlooked-for appearance of General Fladdock! The general was as warmly received as if New York had been in a state of siege and no other general was to be got, for love or money. He shook hands with the Norrises three times all round, and then reviewed them from a little distance as a brave commander might, with his ample cloak drawn forward over the right shoulder and thrown back upon the left side to reveal his manly breast.

“And do I then,” cried the general, “once again behold the choicest spirits of my country!”

“Yes,” said Mr. Norris the father. “Here we are, general.”

Then all the Norrises pressed round the general, inquiring how and where he had been since the date of his last letter, and how he had enjoyed himself in foreign parts, and, particularly and above all, to what extent he had become acquainted with the great dukes, lords, viscounts, marquesses, duchesses, knights, and baronets, in whom the people of those benighted countries had delight.

"Well then, don't ask me," said the general, holding up his hand. "I was among 'em all the time, and have got public journals in my trunk with my name printed"—he lowered his voice and was very impressive here—"among the fashionable news. But, oh the conventionalities of that a-mazing Europe!"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Norris the father, giving his head a melancholy shake, and looking towards Martin as though he would say, "I can't deny it, sir. I would if I could."

"The limited diffusion of a moral sense in that country!" exclaimed the general. "The absence of a moral dignity in man!"

"Ah!" sighed all the Norrises, quite overwhelmed with despondency.

"I couldn't have realised it," pursued the general, "without being located on the spot. Norris, your imagination is the imagination of a strong man, but *you* couldn't have realised it, without being located on the spot!"

"Never," said Mr. Norris.

"The exclusiveness, the pride, the form, the ceremony," exclaimed the general, emphasising the article more vigorously at every repetition. "The artificial barriers set up between man and man; the division of the human race into court cards and plain cards, of every denomination—into clubs, diamonds, spades—anything but hearts!"

"Ah!" cried the whole family. "Too true, general!"

"But stay!" cried Mr. Norris the father, taking him by the arm. "Surely you crossed in the *Screw*, general?"

"Well! so I did," was the reply.

"Possible!" cried the young ladies. "Only think!"

The general seemed at a loss to understand why his having come home in the *Screw* should occasion such a sensation, nor did he seem at all clearer on the subject when Mr. Norris, introducing him to Martin, said—

"A fellow-passenger of yours, I think?"

"Of mine!" exclaimed the general; "No!"

He had never seen Martin, but Martin had seen him, and recognised him, now that they stood face to face, as the gentleman who had

stuck his hands in his pockets towards the end of the voyage, and walked the deck with his nostrils dilated.

Everybody looked at Martin. There was no help for it. The truth must out.

"I came over in the same ship as the general," said Martin, "but not in the same cabin. It being necessary for me to observe strict economy, I took my passage in the steerage."

If the general had been carried up bodily to a loaded cannon, and required to let it off that moment, he could not have been in a state of greater consternation than when he heard these words. He, Fladdock,—Fladdock in full militia uniform, Fladdock the General, Fladdock the caressed of foreign noblemen,—expected to know a fellow who had come over in the steerage of a line-of-packet ship, at the cost of four pound ten! and meeting that fellow in the very sanctuary of New York fashion, and nestling in the bosom of the New York aristocracy! He almost laid his hand upon his sword.

A death-like stillness fell upon the Norrises. If this story should get wind, their country relation had, by his imprudence, for ever disgraced them. They were the bright particular stars of an exalted New York sphere. There were other fashionable spheres above them, and other fashionable spheres below, and none of the stars in any one of these spheres had anything to say to the stars in any other of these spheres. But, through all the spheres it would go forth, that the Norrises, deceived by gentlemanly manners and appearances, had, falling from their high estate, "received" a dollarless and unknown man. O guardian eagle of the pure Republic, had they lived for this!

"You will allow me," said Martin, after a terrible silence, "to take my leave. I feel that I am the cause of at least as much embarrassment here, as I have brought upon myself. But I am bound, before I go, to exonerate this gentleman, who, in introducing me to such society, was quite ignorant of my unworthiness, I assure you."

With that he made his bow to the Norrises, and walked out like a man of snow: very cool externally, but pretty hot within.

"Come, come," said Mr. Norris the father, looking with a pale face on the assembled circle as Martin closed the door, "the young man has this night beheld a refinement of social manner, and an easy magnificence of social decoration, to which he is a stranger in his own country. Let us hope it may awake a moral sense within him."

If that peculiarly transatlantic article, a moral

sense,—for if native statesmen, orators, and pamphleteers, are to be believed, America quite monopolises the commodity,—if that peculiarly transatlantic article be supposed to include a benevolent love of all mankind, certainly Martin's would have borne, just then, a deal of waking. As he strode along the street, with Mark at his heels, his immoral sense was in active operation: prompting him to the utterance of some rather sanguinary remarks, which it was well for his own credit that nobody overheard. He had so far cooled down however, that he had begun to laugh at the recollection of these incidents, when he heard another step behind him, and turning round encountered his friend Bevan, quite out of breath.

He drew his arm through Martin's, and entreating him to walk slowly, was silent for some minutes. At length he said:

"I hope you exonerate me in another sense?"

"How do you mean?" asked Martin.

"I hope you acquit me of intending or foreseeing the termination of our visit. But I scarcely need ask you that."

"Scarcely indeed," said Martin. "I am the more beholden to you for your kindness, when I find what kind of stuff the good citizens here are made of."

"I reckon," his friend returned, "that they are made of pretty much the same stuff as other folks, if they would but own it, and not set up on false pretences."

"In good faith, that's true," said Martin.

"I dare say," resumed his friend, "you might have such a scene as that in an English comedy, and not detect any gross improbability or anomaly in the matter of it?"

"Yes indeed!"

"Doubtless it is more ridiculous here than anywhere else," said his companion; "but our professions are to blame for that. So far as I myself am concerned, I may add that I was perfectly aware from the first that you came over in the steerage, for I had seen the list of passengers, and knew it did not comprise your name."

"I feel more obliged to you than before," said Martin.

"Norris is a very good fellow in his way," observed Mr. Bevan.

"Is he?" said Martin drily.

"Oh yes! there are a hundred good points about him. If you or anybody else addressed him as another order of being, and sued to him *in forma pauperis*, he would be all kindness and consideration."

"I needn't have travelled three thousand miles

from home to find such a character as *that*," said Martin. Neither he nor his friend said anything more on the way back; each appearing to find sufficient occupation in his own thoughts.

The tea, or the supper, or whatever else they call the evening meal, was over when they reached the Major's; but the cloth, ornamented with a few additional smears and stains, was still upon the table. At one end of the board Mrs. Jefferson Brick and two other ladies were drinking tea—out of the ordinary course, evidently, for they were bonneted and shawled, and seemed to have just come home. By the light of three flaring candles of different lengths, in as many candlesticks of different patterns, the room showed to almost as little advantage as in broad day.

These ladies were all three talking together in a very loud tone when Martin and his friend entered; but, seeing those gentlemen, they stopped directly, and became excessively genteel, not to say frosty. As they went on to exchange some few remarks in whispers, the very water in the tea-pot might have fallen twenty degrees in temperature beneath their chilling coldness.

"Have you been to meeting, Mrs. Brick?" asked Martin's friend, with something of a roguish twinkle in his eye.

"To lecture, sir."

"I beg your pardon. I forgot. You don't go to meeting, I think?"

Here the lady on the right of Mrs. Brick gave a pious cough, as much as to say, "*I do!*"—as, indeed, she did, nearly every night in the week.

"A good discourse, ma'am?" asked Mr. Bevan, addressing this lady.

The lady raised her eyes in a pious manner, and answered "Yes." She had been much comforted by some good, strong, peppery doctrine, which satisfactorily disposed of all her friends and acquaintances, and quite settled *their* business. Her bonnet, too, had far outshone every bonnet in the congregation: so she was tranquil on all accounts.

"What course of lectures are you attending now, ma'am?" said Martin's friend, turning again to Mrs. Brick.

"The Philosophy of the Soul—on Wednesdays."

"On Mondays?"

"The Philosophy of Crime."

"On Fridays?"

"The Philosophy of Vegetables."

"You have forgotten Thursdays—the Philosophy of Government, my dear," observed the third lady.

"No," said Mrs. Brick. "That's Tuesdays."

"So it is!" cried the lady. "The Philosophy of Matter, on Thursdays, of course."

"You see, Mr. Chuzzlewit, our ladies are fully employed," said Bevan.

"Indeed you have reason to say so," answered Martin. "Between these very grave pursuits abroad, and family duties at home, their time must be pretty well engrossed."

Martin stopped here, for he saw that the ladies regarded him with no very great favour, though what he had done to deserve the disdainful expression which appeared in their faces he was at a loss to divine. But on their going upstairs to their bed-rooms—which they very soon did—Mr. Bevan informed him that domestic drudgery was far beneath the exalted range of these Philosophers, and that the chances were a hundred to one that neither of the three could perform the easiest woman's work for herself, or make the simplest article of dress for any of her children.

"Though whether they might not be better employed with even such blunt instruments as knitting-needles, than with these edge-tools," he said, "is another question; but I can answer for one thing—they don't often cut themselves. Devotions and lectures are our balls and concerts. They go to these places of resort, as an escape from monotony; look at each other's clothes; and come home again."

"When you say 'home,' do you mean a house like this?"

"Very often. But I see you are tired to death, and will wish you good night. We will discuss your projects in the morning. You cannot but feel already that it is useless staying here, with any hope of advancing them. You will have to go farther."

"And to fare worse?" said Martin, pursuing the old adage.

"Well, I hope not. But sufficient for the day, you know. Good night!"

They shook hands heartily, and separated. As soon as Martin was left alone, the excitement of novelty and change which had sustained him through all the fatigues of the day, departed; and he felt so thoroughly dejected and worn out, that he even lacked the energy to crawl up-stairs to bed.

In twelve or fifteen hours, how great a change had fallen on his hopes and sanguine plans! New and strange as he was to the ground on which he stood, and to the air he breathed, he could not—recalling all that he had crowded into that one day—but entertain a strong misgiving that his enterprise was doomed. Rash and ill-considered as it had often looked on

shipboard, but had never seemed on shore, it wore a dismal aspect, now, that frightened him. Whatever thoughts he called up to his aid, they came upon him in depressing and discouraging shapes, and gave him no relief. Even the diamonds on his finger sparkled with the brightness of tears, and had no ray of hope in all their brilliant lustre.

He continued to sit in gloomy rumination by the stove—unmindful of the boarders who dropped in one by one from their stores and counting-houses, or the neighbouring bar-rooms, and after taking long pulls from a great white water-jug upon the sideboard, and lingering with a kind of hideous fascination near the brass spittoons, lounged heavily to bed—until at length Mark Tapley came and shook him by the arm, supposing him asleep.

"Mark!" he cried, starting.

"All right, sir," said that cheerful follower, snuffing with his fingers the candle he bore. "It ain't a very large bed, your'n, sir; and a man as wasn't thirsty might drink, afore breakfast, all the water you've got to wash in, and arterwards eat the towel. But you'll sleep without rocking to-night, sir."

"I feel as if the house were on the sea," said Martin, staggering when he rose; "and am utterly wretched."

"I'm as jolly as a sandboy, myself, sir," said Mark. "But, Lord, I have reason to be! I ought to have been born here; that's my opinion. Take care how you go"—for they were now ascending the stairs. "You recollect the gentleman aboard the Screw as had the very small trunk, sir?"

"The valise? Yes."

"Well, sir, there's been a delivery of clean clothes from the wash to-night, and they're put outside the bed-room doors here. If you take notice as we go up, what a very few shirts there are, and what a many fronts, you'll penetrate the mystery of his packing."

But Martin was too weary and despondent to take heed of anything, so had no interest in this discovery. Mr. Tapley, nothing dashed by his indifference, conducted him to the top of the house, and into the bed-chamber prepared for his reception: which was a very little narrow room, with half a window in it; a bedstead like a chest without a lid; two chairs; a piece of carpet, such as shoes are commonly tried upon at a ready-made establishment in England; a little looking-glass nailed against the wall; and a washing-table, with a jug and ewer, that might have been mistaken for a milk-pot and slop-basin.

"I suppose they polish themselves with a dry cloth in this country," said Mark. "They've certainly got a touch of the 'phoby, sir."

"I wish you would pull off my boots for me," said Martin, dropping into one of the chairs. "I am quite knocked up—dead beat, Mark."

"You won't say that to-morrow morning, sir," returned Mr. Tapley; "nor even to-night, sir, when you've made a trial of this." With which he produced a very large tumbler, piled up to the brim with little blocks of clear transparent ice, through which one or two thin slices of lemon, and a golden liquid of delicious appearance, appealed from the still depths below, to the loving eye of the spectator.

"What do you call this?" said Martin.

But Mr. Tapley made no answer: merely plunging a reed into the mixture—which caused a pleasant commotion among the pieces of ice—and signifying by an expressive gesture that it was to be pumped up through that agency by the enraptured drinker.

Martin took the glass, with an astonished look; applied his lips to the reed; and cast up his eyes once in ecstasy. He paused no more until the goblet was drained to the last drop.

"There, sir!" said Mark, taking it from him with a triumphant face. "If ever you should happen to be dead beat again, when I ain't in the way, all you've got to do is, to ask the nearest man to go and fetch a cobbler."

"To go and fetch a cobbler?" repeated Martin.

"This wonderful invention, sir," said Mark, tenderly patting the empty glass, "is called a cobbler. Sherry cobbler when you name it long; cobbler, when you name it short. Now you're equal to having your boots took off, and are, in every particular worth mentioning, another man."

Having delivered himself of this solemn preface, he brought the bootjack.

"Mind! I am not going to relapse, Mark," said Martin; "but, good Heaven, if we should be left in some wild part of this country without goods or money!"

"Well, sir!" replied the imperturbable Tapley; "from what we've seen already, I don't know whether, under those circumstances, we shouldn't do better in the wild parts than in the tame ones."

"Oh, Tom Pinch, Tom Pinch!" said Martin, in a thoughtful tone; "what would I give to be again beside you, and able to hear your voice, though it were even in the old bed-room at Pecksniff's!"

"Oh, Dragon, Dragon!" echoed Mark cheer-

fully, "if there warn't any water between you and me, and nothing faint-hearted-like in going back, I don't know that I mightn't say the same. But here am I, Dragon, in New York, America; and there are you in Wiltshire, Europe; and there's a fortune to make, Dragon, and a beautiful young lady to make it for; and whenever you go to see the Monument, Dragon, you mustn't give in on the door-steps, or you'll never get up to the top!"

"Wisely said, Mark," cried Martin. "We must look forward."

"In all the story-books as ever I read, sir, the people as looked backward was turned into stones," replied Mark; "and my opinion always was, that they brought it on themselves, and it served 'em right. I wish you good night, sir, and pleasant dreams!"

"They must be of home, then," said Martin, as he lay down in bed.

"So I say, too," whispered Mark Tapley, when he was out of hearing and in his own room; "for if there don't come a time afore we're well out of this, when there'll be a little more credit in keeping up one's jollity, I'm a United Statesman!"

Leaving them to blend and mingle in their sleep the shadows of objects afar off, as they take fantastic shapes upon the wall in the dim light of thought without control, be it the part of this slight chronicle—a dream within a dream—as rapidly to change the scene, and cross the ocean to the English shore.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DOES BUSINESS WITH THE HOUSE OF ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT AND SON, FROM WHICH ONE OF THE PARTNERS RETIRES UNEXPECTEDLY.

CHANGE begets change. Nothing propagates so fast. If a man habituated to a narrow circle of cares and pleasures, out of which he seldom travels, step beyond it, though for never so brief a space, his departure from the monotonous scene on which he has been an actor of importance, would seem to be the signal for instant confusion. As if, in the gap he had left, the wedge of change were driven to the head, rending what was a solid mass to fragments, things cemented and held together by the usages of years, burst asunder in as many weeks. The mine which Time has slowly dug

beneath familiar objects, is sprung in an instant; and what was rock before, becomes but sand and dust.

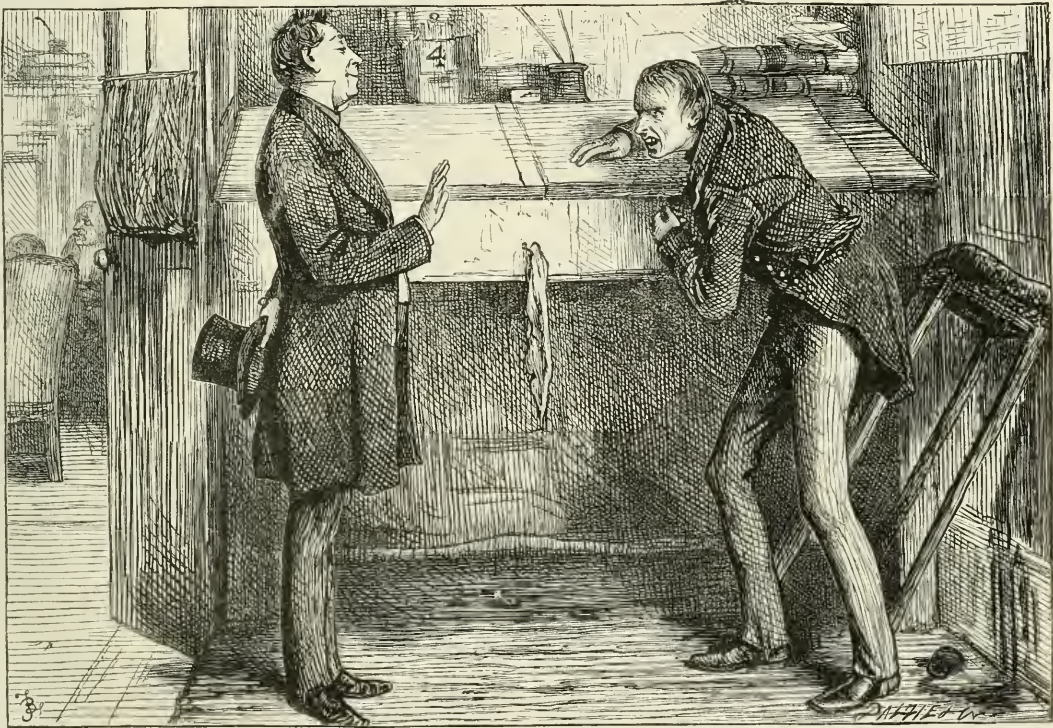
Most men, at one time or other, have proved this in some degree. The extent to which the natural laws of change asserted their supremacy in that limited sphere of action which Martin had deserted, shall be faithfully set down in these pages.

"What a cold spring it is!" whimpered old Anthony, drawing near the evening fire. "It was a warmer season, sure, when I was young!"

"You needn't go scorching your clothes into holes, whether it was or not," observed the amiable Jonas, raising his eyes from yesterday's newspaper. "Broadcloth ain't so cheap as that comes to."

"A good lad!" cried the father, breathing on his cold hands, and feebly chafing them against each other. "A prudent lad! He never delivered himself up to the vanities of dress. No, no!"

"I don't know but I would though, mind you, if I could do it for nothing," said his son, as he resumed the paper.



"MATTER!" CRIED THE VOICE OF MR. PECKSNIFF, AS PECKSNIFF IN THE FLESH SMILED AMIABLY UPON HIM. "THE MATTER, MR. JONAS!"

"Ah!" chuckled the old man. "If, indeed!—But it's very cold."

"Let the fire be!" cried Mr. Jonas, stopping his honoured parent's hand in the use of the poker. "Do you mean to come to want in your old age, that you take to wasting now?"

"There's not time for that, Jonas," said the old man.

"Not time for what!" bawled his heir.

"For me to come to want. I wish there was!"

"You always were as selfish an old blade as

need be," said Jonas, in a voice too low for him to hear, and looking at him with an angry frown. "You act up to your character. You wouldn't mind coming to want, wouldn't you? I dare say you wouldn't. And your own flesh and blood might come to want too, might they, for anything you cared? Oh you precious old flint!"

After this dutiful address, he took his tea-cup in his hand—for that meal was in progress, and the father and son and Chuffey were partakers of it. Then, looking steadfastly at his father,

and stopping now and then to carry a spoonful of tea to his lips, he proceeded in the same tone, thus :

"Want, indeed ! You're a nice old man to be talking of want at this time of day. Beginning to talk of want, are you ? Well, I declare ! There isn't time ? No, I should hope not. But you'd live to be a couple of hundred if you could ; and after all be discontented. I know you !"

The old man sighed, and still sat cowering before the fire. Mr. Jonas shook his Britannia-metal teaspoon at him, and taking a loftier position went on to argue the point on high moral grounds.

"If you're in such a state of mind as that," he grumbled, but in the same subdued key, "why don't you make over your property ? Buy an annuity cheap, and make your life interesting to yourself and everybody else that watches the speculation. But no, that wouldn't suit *you*. That would be natural conduct to your own son, and you like to be unnatural, and to keep him out of his rights. Why, I should be ashamed of myself if I was you, and glad to hide my head in the what you may call it."

Possibly this general phrase supplied the place of grave, or tomb, or sepulchre, or cemetery, or mausoleum, or other such word which the filial tenderness of Mr. Jonas made him delicate of pronouncing. He pursued the theme no further ; for Chuffey, somehow discovering, from his old corner by the fireside, that Anthony was in the attitude of a listener, and that Jonas appeared to be speaking, suddenly cried out, like one inspired :

"He is your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Your own son, sir !"

Old Chuffey little suspected what depth of application these words had, or that, in the bitter satire which they bore, they might have sunk into the old man's very soul, could he have known what words were hanging on his own son's lips, or what was passing in his thoughts. But the voice diverted the current of Anthony's reflections, and roused him.

"Yes, yes, Chuffey, Jonas is a chip of the old block. It's a very old block now. Chuffey," said the old man, with a strange look of discomposure.

"Precious old," assented Jonas.

"No, no, no," said Chuffey. "No, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Not old at all, sir."

"Oh ! He's worse than ever, you know !" cried Jonas, quite disgusted. "Upon my soul, father, he's getting too bad. Hold your tongue, will you ?"

"He says you're wrong !" cried Anthony to the old clerk.

"Tut, tut !" was Chuffey's answer. "I know better. I say *he's* wrong. I say *he's* wrong. He's a boy. That's what he is. So are you, Mr. Chuzzlewit—a kind of boy. Ha ! ha ! ha ! You're quite a boy to many I have known ; you're a boy to me ; you're a boy to hundreds of us. Don't mind him."

With which extraordinary speech—for in the case of Chuffey this was a burst of eloquence without a parallel—the poor old shadow drew through his palsied arm his master's hand, and held it there, with his own folded upon it, as if he would defend him.

"I grow deafer every day, Chuffey," said Anthony, with as much softness of manner, or, to describe it more correctly, with as little hardness as he was capable of expressing.

"No, no," cried Chuffey. "No you don't. What if you did ? I've been deaf this twenty year."

"I grow blinder, too," said the old man, shaking his head.

"That's a good sign !" cried Chuffey. "Ha ! ha ! The best sign in the world ! You saw too well before."

He patted Anthony upon the hand as one might comfort a child, and drawing the old man's arm still further through his own, shook his trembling fingers towards the spot where Jonas sat, as though he would wave him off. But, Anthony remaining quite still and silent, he relaxed his hold by slow degrees and lapsed into his usual niche in the corner : merely putting forth his hand at intervals and touching his old employer gently on the coat, as with the design of assuring himself that he was yet beside him.

Mr. Jonas was so very much amazed by these proceedings that he could do nothing but stare at the two old men, until Chuffey had fallen into his usual state, and Anthony had sunk into a doze ; when he gave some vent to his emotions by going close up to the former personage, and making as though he would, in vulgar parlance, "punch his head."

"They've been carrying on this game," thought Jonas, in a brown study, "for the last two or three weeks. I never saw my father take so much notice of him as he has in that time. What ! You're legacy hunting are you, Mister Chuffey ? Eh ?"

But Chuffey was as little conscious of the thought as of the bodily advance of Mr. Jonas's clenched fist, which hovered fondly about his ear. When he had scowled at him to his

heart's content, Jonas took the candle from the table, and walking into the glass office, produced a bunch of keys from his pocket. With one of these he opened a secret drawer in the desk: peeping stealthily out, as he did so, to be certain that the two old men were still before the fire.

"All as right as ever," said Jonas, propping the lid of the desk open with his forehead, and unfolding a paper. "Here's the will, Mister Chuff. Thirty pound a year for your maintenance, old boy, and all the rest to his only son, Jonas. You needn't trouble yourself to be too affectionate. You won't get anything by it. What's that?"

It was startling, certainly. A face on the other side of the glass partition looking curiously in: and not at him but at the paper in his hand. For the eyes were attentively cast down upon the writing, and were swiftly raised when he cried out. Then they met his own, and were as the eyes of Mr. Pecksniff.

Suffering the lid of the desk to fall with a loud noise, but not forgetting even then to lock it, Jonas, pale and breathless, gazed upon this phantom. It moved, opened the door, and walked in.

"What's the matter?" cried Jonas, falling back. "Who is it? Where do you come from? What do you want?"

"Matter!" cried the voice of Mr. Pecksniff, as Pecksniff in the flesh smiled amiably upon him. "The matter, Mr. Jonas!"

"What are you prying and peering about here for?" said Jonas, angrily. "What do you mean by coming up to town in this way, and taking one unawares? It's precious odd a man can't read the—the newspaper—in his own office without being startled out of his wits by people coming in without notice. Why didn't you knock at the door?"

"So I did, Mr. Jonas," answered Pecksniff, "but no one heard me. I was curious," he added in his gentle way as he laid his hand upon the young man's shoulder, "to find out what part of the newspaper interested you so much; but the glass was too dim and dirty."

Jonas glanced in haste at the partition. Well. It wasn't very clean. So far he spoke the truth.

"Was it poetry, now?" said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking the forefinger of his right hand with an air of cheerful banter. "Or was it politics? Or was it the price of stocks? The main chance, Mr. Jonas, the main chance I suspect."

"You ain't far from the truth," answered Jonas, recovering himself and snuffing the

candle: "but how the deuce do you come to be in London again? Ecod! it's enough to make a man stare, to see a fellow looking at him all of a sudden, who he thought was sixty or seventy mile away."

"So it is," said Mr. Pecksniff. "No doubt of it, my dear Mr. Jonas. For while the human mind is constituted as it is—"

"Oh, bother the human mind," interrupted Jonas with impatience, "what have you come up for?"

"A little matter of business," said Mr. Pecksniff, "which has arisen quite unexpectedly."

"Oh!" cried Jonas, "is that all? Well. Here's father in the next room. Hallo father, here's Pecksniff! He gets more addle-pated every day he lives, I do believe," muttered Jonas, shaking his honoured parent roundly. "Don't I tell you Pecksniff's here, stupid-head?"

The combined effects of the shaking and this loving remonstrance soon awoke the old man, who gave Mr. Pecksniff a chuckling welcome, which was attributable in part to his being glad to see that gentleman, and in part to his unfading delight in the recollection of having called him a hypocrite. As Mr. Pecksniff had not yet taken tea (indeed he had, but an hour before, arrived in London) the remains of the late collation, with a rasher of bacon, were served up for his entertainment; and as Mr. Jonas had a business appointment in the next street, he stepped out to keep it: promising to return before Mr. Pecksniff could finish his repast.

"And now my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff to Anthony: "now that we are alone, pray tell me what I can do for you. I say alone, because I believe that our dear friend Mr. Chuffey is, metaphysically speaking, a—shall I say a dummy?" asked Mr. Pecksniff with his sweetest smile, and his head very much on one side.

"He neither hears us," replied Anthony, "nor sees us."

"Why then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I will be bold to say, with the utmost sympathy for his afflictions, and the greatest admiration of those excellent qualities which do equal honour to his head and to his heart, that he *is* what is playfully termed a dummy. You were going to observe, my dear sir—"

"I was not going to make any observation that I know of," replied the old man.

"I was," said Mr. Pecksniff, mildly.

"Oh! *you* were? What was it?"

"That I never," said Mr. Pecksniff, previously rising to see that the door was shut, and arranging his chair when he came back, so that it could not be opened in the least without his

immediately becoming aware of the circumstance: "that I never in my life was so astonished as by the receipt of your letter yesterday. That you should do me the honour to wish to take counsel with me on any matter, amazed me; but that you should desire to do so, to the exclusion even of Mr. Jonas, showed an amount of confidence in one to whom you had done a verbal injury—merely a verbal injury, you were anxious to repair—which gratified, which moved, which overcame me."

He was always a glib speaker, but he delivered this short address very glibly; having been at some pains to compose it outside the coach.

Although he paused for a reply, and truly said that he was there at Anthony's request, the old man sat gazing at him in profound silence and with a perfectly blank face. Nor did he seem to have the least desire or impulse to pursue the conversation, though Mr. Pecksniff looked towards the door, and pulled out his watch, and gave him many other hints that their time was short, and Jonas, if he kept his word, would soon return. But the strangest incident in all this strange behaviour was, that of a sudden—in a moment—so swiftly that it was impossible to trace how, or to observe any process of change—his features fell into their old expression, and he cried, striking his hand passionately upon the table as if no interval at all had taken place:

"Will you hold your tongue, sir, and let me speak?"

Mr. Pecksniff deferred to him with a submissive bow; and said within himself, "I knew his hand was changed, and that his writing staggered. I said so yesterday. Ahem! Dear me!"

"Jonas is sweet upon your daughter, Pecksniff," said the old man, in his usual tone.

"We spoke of that, if you remember, sir, at Mrs. Todgers's," replied the courteous architect.

"You needn't speak so loud," retorted Anthony. "I'm not so deaf as that."

Mr. Pecksniff had certainly raised his voice pretty high: not so much because he thought Anthony was deaf, as because he felt convinced that his perceptive faculties were waxing dim: but this quick resentment of his considerate behaviour greatly disconcerted him, and, not knowing what tack to shape his course upon, he made another inclination of the head, yet more submissive than the last.

"I have said," repeated the old man, "that Jonas is sweet upon your daughter."

"A charming girl, sir," murmured Mr. Peck-

sniff, seeing that he waited for an answer. "A dear girl, Mr. Chuzzlewit, though I say it who should not."

"You know better," cried the old man, advancing his weazen face at least a yard, and starting forward in his chair to do it. "You lie! What, you *will* be a hypocrite, will you?"

"My good sir," Mr. Pecksniff began.

"Don't call me a good sir," retorted Anthony, "and don't claim to be one yourself. If your daughter was what you would have me believe, she wouldn't do for Jonas. Being what she is, I think she will. He might be deceived in a wife. She might run riot, contract debts, and waste his substance. Now when I am dead—"

His face altered so horribly as he said the word, that Mr. Pecksniff really was fain to look another way.

"—It will be worse for me to know of such doings, than if I was alive: for to be tormented for getting that together, which even while I suffer for its acquisition is flung into the very kennels of the streets, would be insupportable torture. No," said the old man, hoarsely, "let that be saved at least; let there be something gained, and kept fast hold of, when so much is lost."

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Mr. Pecksniff, "these are unwholesome fancies; quite unnecessary, sir, quite uncalled for, I am sure. The truth is, my dear sir, that you are not well!"

"Not dying though!" cried Anthony, with something like the snarl of a wild animal. "Not yet! There are years of life in me. Why, look at him," pointing to his feeble clerk. "Death has no right to leave him standing, and to mow me down!"

Mr. Pecksniff was so much afraid of the old man, and so completely taken aback by the state in which he found him, that he had not even presence of mind enough to call up a scrap of morality from the great storehouse within his own breast. Therefore he stammered out that no doubt it was, in fairness and decency, Mr. Chuffey's turn to expire; and that from all he had heard of Mr. Chuffey, and the little he had the pleasure of knowing of that gentleman, personally, he felt convinced in his own mind that he would see the propriety of expiring with as little delay as possible.

"Come here!" said the old man, beckoning him to draw nearer. "Jonas will be my heir, Jonas will be rich, and a great catch for you. You know that. Jonas is sweet upon your daughter."

"I know that too," thought Mr. Pecksniff, "for you have said it often enough."

"He might get more money than with her," said the old man, "but she will help him to take care of what they have. She is not too young or heedless, and comes of a good hard gripping stock. But don't you play too fine a game. She only holds him by a thread; and if you draw it too tight (I know his temper) it'll snap. Bind him when he's in the mood, Pecksniff; bind him. You're too deep. In your way of leading him on, you'll leave him miles behind. Bah, you man of oil, have I no eyes to see how you have angled with him from the first?"

"Now I wonder," thought Mr. Pecksniff, looking at him with a wistful face, "whether this is all he has to say!"

Old Anthony rubbed his hands and muttered to himself; complained again that he was cold; drew his chair before the fire; and, sitting with his back to Mr. Pecksniff, and his chin sunk down upon his breast, was, in another minute, quite regardless or forgetful of his presence.

Uncouth and unsatisfactory as this short interview had been, it had furnished Mr. Pecksniff with a hint which, supposing nothing further were imparted to him, repaid the journey up, and home again. For the good gentleman had never (for want of an opportunity) dived into the depths of Mr. Jonas's nature; and any recipe for catching such a son-in-law (much more one written on a leaf out of his own father's book) was worth the having. In order that he might lose no chance of improving so fair an opportunity by allowing Anthony to fall asleep before he had finished all he had to say, Mr. Pecksniff, in the disposal of the refreshments on the table—a work to which he now applied himself in earnest—resorted to many ingenious contrivances for attracting his attention, such as coughing, sneezing, clattering the teacups, sharpening the knives, dropping the loaf, and so forth. But all in vain, for Mr. Jonas returned, and Anthony had said no more.

"What! my father asleep again?" he cried, as he hung up his hat, and cast a look at him. "Ah! and snoring. Only hear!"

"He snores very deep," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"Snores deep?" repeated Jonas. "Yes; let him alone for that. He'll snore for six, at any time."

"Do you know, Mr. Jonas," said Pecksniff, "that I think your father is—don't let me alarm you—breaking?"

"Oh, is he though," replied Jonas, with a shake of the head which expressed the closeness of his dutiful observation. "Ecod, you

don't know how tough he is. He ain't upon the move yet."

"It struck me that he was changed, both in his appearance and manner," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"That's all you know about it," returned Jonas, seating himself with a melancholy air. "He never was better than he is now. How are they all at home? How's Charity?"

"Blooming, Mr. Jonas, blooming."

"And the other one—how's she?"

"Volatile trifler!" said Mr. Pecksniff, fondly musing. "She is well—she is well. Roving from parlour to bed-room, Mr. Jonas, like the bee; skimming from post to pillar, like the butterfly; dipping her young beak into our currant wine, like the humming-bird! Ah! were she a little less giddy than she is; and had she but the sterling qualities of Cherry, my young friend!"

"Is she so very giddy, then?" asked Jonas.

"Well, well!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with great feeling; "let me not be hard upon my child. Beside her sister Cherry she appears so. A strange noise that, Mr. Jonas!"

"Something wrong in the clock, I suppose," said Jonas, glancing towards it. "So the other one ain't your favourite, ain't she?"

The fond father was about to reply, and had already summoned into his face a look of most intense sensibility, when the sound he had already noticed was repeated.

"Upon my word, Mr. Jonas, that is a very extraordinary clock," said Pecksniff.

It would have been, if it had made the noise which startled them: but another kind of time-piece was fast running down, and from that the sound proceeded. A scream from Chuffey, rendered a hundred times more loud and formidable by his silent habits, made the house ring from roof to cellar; and, looking round, they saw Anthony Chuzzlewit extended on the floor, with the old clerk upon his knees beside him.

He had fallen from his chair in a fit, and lay there, battling for each gasp of breath, with every shrivelled vein and sinew starting in its place, as if it were bent on bearing witness to his age, and sternly pleading with Nature against his recovery. It was frightful to see how the principle of life, shut up within his withered frame, fought like a strong devil, mad to be released, and rent its ancient prison-house. A young man in the fulness of his vigour, struggling with so much strength of desperation, would have been a dismal sight; but an old, old, shrunken body, endowed with preternatural might, and giving the lie in every motion of its

every limb and joint to its enfeebled aspect, was a hideous spectacle indeed.

They raised him up, and fetched a surgeon with all haste, who bled the patient, and applied some remedies; but the fits held him so long, that it was past midnight when they got him—quiet now, but quite unconscious and exhausted—into bed.

“Don’t go,” said Jonas, putting his ashy lips to Mr. Pecksniff’s ear, and whispering across the bed. “It was a mercy you were present when he was taken ill. Some one might have said it was my doing.”

“Your doing!” cried Mr. Pecksniff.

“I don’t know but they might,” he replied, wiping the moisture from his white face. “People say such things. How does he look now?”

Mr. Pecksniff shook his head.

“I used to joke, you know,” said Jonas: “but I—I never wished him dead. Do you think he’s very bad?”

“The doctor said he was. You heard,” was Mr. Pecksniff’s answer.

“Ah! but he might say that to charge us more, in case of his getting well,” said Jonas. “You mustn’t go away, Pecksniff. Now it’s come to this, I wouldn’t be without a witness for a thousand pound.”

Chuffey said not a word, and heard not a word. He had sat himself down in a chair at the bedside, and there he remained, motionless; except that he sometimes bent his head over the pillow, and seemed to listen. He never changed in this. Though once in the dreary night Mr. Pecksniff, having dozed, awoke with a confused impression that he had heard him praying, and strangely mingling figures—not of speech, but arithmetic—with his broken prayers.

Jonas sat there, too, all night; not where his father could have seen him, had his consciousness returned, but hiding, as it were, behind him, and only reading how he looked, in Mr. Pecksniff’s eyes. *He*, the coarse upstart, who had ruled the house so long—that craven cur, who was afraid to move, and shook so, that his very shadow fluttered on the wall!

It was broad, bright, stirring day when, leaving the old clerk to watch him, they went down to breakfast. People hurried up and down the street; windows and doors were opened; thieves and beggars took their usual posts; workmen bestirred themselves; tradesmen set forth their shops; bailiffs and constables were on the watch; all kinds of human creatures strove, in their several ways, as hard to live, as the one sick old man who combated for every grain of sand in

his fast-emptying glass, as eagerly as if it were an empire.

“If anything happens, Pecksniff,” said Jonas, “you must promise me to stop here till it’s all over. You shall see that I do what’s right.”

“I know that you will do what’s right, Mr. Jonas,” said Pecksniff.

“Yes, yes, but I won’t be doubted. No one shall have it in his power to say a syllable against me,” he returned. “I know how people will talk. Just as if he wasn’t old, or I had the secret of keeping him alive!”

Mr. Pecksniff promised that he would remain, if circumstances should render it, in his esteemed friend’s opinion, desirable; they were finishing their meal in silence, when suddenly an apparition stood before them, so ghastly to the view, that Jonas shrieked aloud, and both recoiled in horror.

Old Anthony, dressed in his usual clothes, was in the room—beside the table. He leaned upon the shoulder of his solitary friend; and on his livid face, and on his horny hands, and in his glassy eyes, and traced by an eternal finger in the very drops of sweat upon his brow, was one word—Death.

He spoke to them—in something of his own voice too, but sharpened and made hollow, like a dead man’s face. What he would have said, God knows. He seemed to utter words, but they were such as man had never heard. And this was the most fearful circumstance of all, to see him standing there, gabbling in an unearthly tongue.

“He’s better now,” said Chuffey. “Better now. Let him sit in his old chair, and he’ll be well again. I told him not to mind. I said so, yesterday.”

They put him in his easy-chair, and wheeled it near the window; then, setting open the door, exposed him to the free current of morning air. But not all the air that is, nor all the winds that ever blew ’twixt Heaven and Earth, could have brought new life to him.

Plunge him to the throat in golden pieces now, and his heavy fingers shall not close on one!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE READER IS BROUGHT INTO COMMUNICATION WITH SOME PROFESSIONAL PERSONS, AND SHEDS A TEAR OVER THE FILIAL PIETY OF GOOD MR. JONAS.

MR. PECKSNIFF was in a hackney cabriolet, for Jonas Chuzzlewit had said “Spare no expense.” Mankind is evil in its thoughts

and in its base constructions, and Jonas was resolved it should not have an inch to stretch into an ell against him. It never should be charged upon his father's son that he had grudged the money for his father's funeral. Hence, until the obsequies should be concluded, Jonas had taken for his motto "Spend, and spare not."

Mr. Pecksniff had been to the undertaker, and was now upon his way to another officer in the train of mourning—a female functionary, a nurse, and watcher, and performer of nameless offices about the persons of the dead—whom he had recommended. Her name, as Mr. Pecksniff gathered from a scrap of writing in his hand, was Gamp; her residence in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn. So Mr. Pecksniff, in a hackney cab, was rattling over Holborn stones, in quest of Mrs. Gamp.

This lady lodged at a bird-fancier's, next door but one to the celebrated mutton-pie shop, and directly opposite to the original cat's-meat warehouse; the renown of which establishments was duly heralded on their respective fronts. It was a little house, and this was the more convenient; for Mrs. Gamp being, in her highest walk of art, a monthly nurse, or, as her sign-board boldly had it, "Midwife," and lodging in the first-floor-front, was easily assailable at night by pebbles, walking-sticks, and fragments of tobacco-pipe: all much more efficacious than the street-door knocker, which was so constructed as to wake the street with ease, and even spread alarms of fire in Holborn, without making the smallest impression on the premises to which it was addressed.

It chanced on this particular occasion that Mrs. Gamp had been up all the previous night, in attendance upon a ceremony to which the usage of gossips has given that name which expresses, in two syllables, the curse pronounced on Adam. It chanced that Mrs. Gamp had not been regularly engaged, but had been called in at a crisis, in consequence of her great repute, to assist another professional lady with her advice; and thus it happened that, all points of interest in the case being over, Mrs. Gamp had come home again to the bird-fancier's, and gone to bed. So, when Mr. Pecksniff drove up in the hackney-cab, Mrs. Gamp's curtains were drawn close, and Mrs. Gamp was fast asleep behind them.

If the bird-fancier had been at home, as he ought to have been, there would have been no great harm in this; but he was out, and his shop was closed. The shutters were down certainly; and in every pane of glass there was at least

one tiny bird in a tiny bird-cage, twittering and hopping his little ballet of despair, and knocking his head against the roof; while one unhappy goldfinch who lived outside a red villa with his name on the door, drew the water for his own drinking, and mutely appealed to some good man to drop a farthing's worth of poison in it. Still, the door was shut. Mr. Pecksniff tried the latch, and shook it, causing a cracked bell inside to ring most mournfully; but no one came. The bird-fancier was an easy shaver also, and a fashionable hair-dresser also; and perhaps he had been sent for, express, from the court end of the town, to trim a lord, or cut and curl a lady; but however that might be, there, upon his own ground, he was not; nor was there any more distinct trace of him to assist the imagination of an inquirer, than a professional print or emblem of his calling (much favoured in the trade), representing a hair-dresser of easy manners curling a lady of distinguished fashion, in the presence of a patent upright grand pianoforte.

Noting these circumstances, Mr. Pecksniff, in the innocence of his heart, applied himself to the knocker; but at the first double knock, every window in the street became alive with female heads; and before he could repeat the performance, whole troops of married ladies (some about to trouble Mrs. Gamp themselves, very shortly) came flocking round the steps, all crying out with one accord, and with uncommon interest, "Knock at the winder, sir, knock at the winder. Lord bless you, don't lose no more time than you can help—knock at the winder!"

Acting upon this suggestion, and borrowing the driver's whip for the purpose, Mr. Pecksniff soon made a commotion among the first-floor flower-pots, and roused Mrs. Gamp, whose voice—to the great satisfaction of the matrons—was heard to say, "I'm coming."

"He's as pale as a muffin," said one lady, in allusion to Mr. Pecksniff.

"So he ought to be, if he's the feelings of a man," observed another.

A third lady (with her arms folded) said she wished he had chosen any other time for fetching Mrs. Gamp, but it always happened so with *her*.

It gave Mr. Pecksniff much uneasiness to find, from these remarks, that he was supposed to have come to Mrs. Gamp upon an errand touching—not the close of life, but the other end. Mrs. Gamp herself was under the same impression, for, throwing open the window, she cried behind the curtains, as she hastily attired herself—

"Is it Mrs. Perkins?"

"No!" returned Mr. Pecksniff, sharply, "nothing of the sort."

"What, Mr. Whilks!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "Don't say it's you, Mr. Whilks, and that poor creature Mrs. Whilks with not even a pincushion ready. Don't say it's you, Mr. Whilks!"

"It isn't Mr. Whilks," said Pecksniff. "I don't know the man. Nothing of the kind. A gentleman is dead; and some person being wanted in the house, you have been recommended by Mr. Mould the undertaker."

As she was by this time in a condition to appear, Mrs. Gamp, who had a face for all occasions, looked out of her window with her mourning countenance, and said she would be down directly. But the matrons took it very ill, that Mr. Pecksniff's mission was of so unimportant a kind; and the lady with her arms folded, rated him in good round terms, signifying that she would be glad to know what he meant by terrifying delicate females "with his corpses;" and giving it as her opinion that he was quite ugly enough to know better. The other ladies were not at all behind-hand in expressing similar sentiments; and the children, of whom some scores had now collected, hooted and defied Mr. Pecksniff quite savagely. So, when Mrs. Gamp appeared, the unoffending gentleman was glad to hustle her with very little ceremony into the cabriolet, and drive off, overwhelmed with popular execration.

Mrs. Gamp had a large bundle with her, a pair of pattens, and a species of gig umbrella; the latter article in colour like a faded leaf, except where a circular patch of a lively blue had been dexterously let in at the top. She was much flurried by the haste she had made, and laboured under the most erroneous views of cabriolets, which she appeared to confound with mail-coaches or stage-waggons, inasmuch as she was constantly endeavouring for the first half-mile to force her luggage through the little front window, and clamouring to the driver to "put it in the boot." When she was disabused of this idea, her whole being resolved itself into an absorbing anxiety about her pattens, with which she played innumerable games at quoits, on Mr. Pecksniff's legs. It was not until they were close upon the house of mourning that she had enough composure to observe—

"And so the gentleman's dead, sir! Ah! The more's the pity"—she didn't even know his name. "But it's what we must all come to. It's as certain as being born, except that we can't make our calculations as exact. Ah! Poor dear!"

She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up, and only showing the white of it. Having very little neck, it cost her some trouble to look over herself, if one may say so, at those to whom she talked. She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and bonnet to correspond. In these dilapidated articles of dress she had, on principle, arrayed herself, time out of mind, on such occasions as the present; for this at once expressed a decent amount of veneration for the deceased, and invited the next of kin to present her with a fresher suit of weeds: an appeal so frequently successful, that the very fetch and ghost of Mrs. Gamp, bonnet and all, might be seen hanging up, any hour in the day, in at least a dozen of the second-hand clothes shops about Holborn. The face of Mrs. Gamp—the nose in particular—was somewhat red and swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a smell of spirits. Like most persons who have attained to great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly; inasmuch, that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman, she went to a lying-in or a laying-out with equal zest and relish.

"Ah!" repeated Mrs. Gamp; for it was always a safe sentiment in cases of mourning. "Ah dear! When Gamp was summonsed to his long home, and I see him a lying in Guy's Hospital with a penny piece on each eye, and his wooden leg under his left arm, I thought I should have fainted away. But I bore up."

If certain whispers current in the Kingsgate Street circles had any truth in them, she had indeed borne up surprisingly; and had exerted such uncommon fortitude, as to dispose of Mr. Gamp's remains for the benefit of science. But it should be added, in fairness, that this had happened twenty years before; and that Mr. and Mrs. Gamp had long been separated, on the ground of incompatibility of temper in their drink.

"You have become indifferent since then, I suppose?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Use is second nature, Mrs. Gamp."

"You may well say second nature, sir," returned that lady. "One's first ways is to find sich things a trial to the feelings, and so is one's lasting custom. If it wasn't for the nerve a little sip of liquor gives me (I never was able to do more than taste it), I never could go through with what I sometimes has to do. 'Mrs. Harris,' I says, at the very last case as ever I acted in, which it was but a young person, 'Mrs. Harris,'

I says, 'leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and don't ask me to take none, but let me put my lips to it when I am so dispoed, and then I will do what I am engaged to do, according to the best of my ability.' 'Mrs. Gamp,' she says, in answer, 'if ever there was a sober creetur to be got at eighteenpence a day for working people, and three and six for gentlefolks—night watching,' said Mrs. Gamp, with emphasis, "' being a extra charge—you are that inwallable person.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'don't name the

charge, for if I could afford to lay all my feller creeturs out for nothink, I would gladly do it, sich is the love I bears 'em. But what I always says to them as has the management of matters, Mrs. Harris'"—here she kept her eye on Mr. Pecksniff—" 'be they gents, or be they ladies—is, don't ask me whether I won't take none, or whether I will, but leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and let me put my lips to it when I am so dispoed.'

The conclusion of this affecting narrative



"WELL MRS. GAMP, AND HOW ARE 'YOU,' MRS. GAMP?" SAID THIS GENTLEMAN, IN A VOICE AS SOFT AS HIS STEP.

brought them to the house. In the passage they encountered Mr. Mould the undertaker: a little elderly gentleman, bald, and in a suit of black; with a note-book in his hand, a massive gold watch-chain dangling from his fob, and a face in which a queer attempt at melancholy was at odds with a smirk of satisfaction; so that he looked as a man might, who, in the very act of smacking his lips over choice old wine, tried to make believe it was physic.

"Well, Mrs. Gamp, and how are *you*, Mrs.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, II.

Gamp?" said this gentleman, in a voice as soft as his step.

"Pretty well, I thank you, sir," dropping a curtsey.

"You'll be very particular here, Mrs. Gamp. This is not a common case, Mrs. Gamp. Let everything be very nice and comfortable, Mrs. Gamp, if you please," said the undertaker, shaking his head with a solemn air.

"It shall be, sir," she replied, curtseying again. "You knows me of old, sir, I hope."

"I hope so, too, Mrs. Gamp," said the undertaker; "and I think so also." Mrs. Gamp curtseyed again. "This is one of the most impressive cases, sir," he continued, addressing Mr. Pecksniff, "that I have seen in the whole course of my professional experience."

"Indeed, Mr. Mould!" cried that gentleman.

"Such affectionate regret, sir, I never saw. There is no limitation—there is positively no limitation,"—opening his eyes wide, and standing on tiptoe, "in point of expense! I have orders, sir! to put on my whole establishment of mutes; and mutes come very dear, Mr. Pecksniff; not to mention their drink. To provide silver-plated handles of the very best description, ornamented with angels' heads from the most expensive dies. To be perfectly profuse in feathers. In short, sir, to turn out something absolutely gorgeous."

"My friend Mr. Jonas is an excellent man," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"I have seen a good deal of what is filial in my time, sir," retorted Mould, "and what is unfilial too. It is our lot. We come into the knowledge of those secrets. But anything so filial as this; anything so honourable to human nature; so calculated to reconcile all of us to the world we live in; never yet came under my observation. It only proves, sir, what was so forcibly observed by the lamented theatrical poet—buried at Stratford—that there is good in everything."

"It is very pleasant to hear you say so, Mr. Mould," observed Pecksniff.

"You are very kind, sir. And what a man Mr. Chuzzlewit was, sir! Ah! what a man he was. You may talk of your lord mayors," said Mould, waving his hand at the public in general, "your sheriffs, your common councilmen, your trumpety; but show me a man in this city who is worthy to walk in the shoes of the departed Mr. Chuzzlewit. No, no," cried Mould, with bitter sarcasm. "Hang 'em up, hang 'em up: sole 'em and heel 'em, and have 'em ready for his son against he's old enough to wear 'em; but don't try 'em on yourselves, for they won't fit you. We knew him," said Mould, in the same biting vein, as he pocketed his note-book; "we knew him, and are not to be caught with chaff. Mr. Pecksniff, sir, good morning."

Mr. Pecksniff returned the compliment; and Mould, sensible of having distinguished himself, was going away with a brisk smile, when he fortunately remembered the occasion. Quickly becoming depressed again, he sighed; looked into the crown of his hat, as if for comfort; put it on without finding any; and slowly departed.

Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Pecksniff then ascended the staircase; and the former, having been shown to the chamber in which all that remained of Anthony Chuzzlewit lay covered up, with but one loving heart, and that a halting one, to mourn it, left the latter free to enter the darkened room below, and rejoin Mr. Jonas, from whom he had now been absent nearly two hours.

He found that example to bereaved sons and pattern in the eyes of all performers of funerals, musing over a fragment of writing-paper on the desk, and scratching figures on it with a pen. The old man's chair, and hat, and walking-stick, were removed from their accustomed places, and put out of sight; the window-blinds, as yellow as November fogs, were drawn down close; Jonas himself was so subdued, that he could scarcely be heard to speak, and only seen to walk across the room.

"Pecksniff," he said, in a whisper, "you shall have the regulation of it all, mind! You shall be able to tell anybody who talks about it that everything was correctly and freely done. There isn't any one you'd like to ask to the funeral, is there?"

"No, Mr. Jonas, I think not."

"Because if there is, you know," said Jonas, "ask him. We don't want to make a secret of it."

"No," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, after a little reflection. "I am not the less obliged to you on that account, Mr. Jonas, for your liberal hospitality; but there really is no one."

"Very well," said Jonas; "then you, and I, and Chuffey, and the doctor, will be just a coachful. We'll have the doctor, Pecksniff, because he knows what was the matter with him, and that it couldn't be helped."

"Where *is* our dear friend, Mr. Chuffey?" asked Pecksniff, looking round the chamber, and winking both his eyes at once—for he was overcome by his feelings.

But here he was interrupted by Mrs. Gamp, who, divested of her bonnet and shawl, came sidling and bridling into the room; and, with some sharpness, demanded a conference outside the door with Mr. Pecksniff.

"You may say whatever you wish to say here, Mrs. Gamp," said that gentleman, shaking his head with a melancholy expression.

"It is not much as I have to say, when people is a mourning for the dead and gone," said Mrs. Gamp; "but what I have to say is *to* the pint and purpose, and no offence intended, must be so considered. I have been at a many places in my time, gentlemen, and I hope I knows what my duties is, and how the same should be

performed: in course, if I did not, it would be very strange, and very wrong in sich a gentleman as Mr. Mould, which has undertook the highest families in this land, and given every satisfaction, so to recommend me as he does. I have seen a deal of trouble my own self," said Mrs. Gamp, laying greater and greater stress upon her words, "and I can feel for them as has their feelings tried, but I am not a Rooshan or a Prooshan, and consequently cannot suffer Spies to be set over me."

Before it was possible that an answer could be returned, Mrs. Gamp, growing redder in the face, went on to say:

"It is not a easy matter, gentlemen, to live when you are left a widder woman; particular when your feelings works upon you to that extent that you often find yourself a going out, on terms which is a certain loss, and never can repay. But, in whatever way you earns your bread, you may have rules and regulations of your own, which cannot be broke through. Some people," said Mrs. Gamp, again entrenching herself behind her strong point, as if it were not assailable by human ingenuity, "may be Rooshans, and others may be Prooshans; they are born so, and will please themselves. Them which is of other natures thinks different."

"If I understand this good lady," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to Jonas, "Mr. Chuffey is troublesome to her. Shall I fetch him down?"

"Do," said Jonas. "I was going to tell you he was up there, when she came in. I'd go myself and bring him down, only—only I'd rather you went, if you don't mind."

Mr. Pecksniff promptly departed, followed by Mrs. Gamp, who, seeing that he took a bottle and glass from the cupboard, and carried it in his hand, was much softened.

"I am sure," she said, "that if it wasn't for his own happiness, I should no more mind his being there, poor dear, than if he was a fly. But them as isn't used to these things, thinks so much of 'em afterwards, that it's a kindness to 'em not to let 'em have their wish. And even," said Mrs. Gamp, probably in reference to some flowers of speech she had already strewn on Mr. Chuffey, "even if one calls 'em names, it's only done to rouse 'em."

Whatever epithets she had bestowed on the old clerk, they had not roused *him*. He sat beside the bed, in the chair he had occupied all the previous night, with his hands folded before him, and his head bowed down; and neither looked up, on their entrance, nor gave any sign of consciousness, until Mr. Pecksniff took him by the arm, when he meekly rose.

"Three score and ten," said Chuffey, "ought and carry seven. Some men are so strong that they live to four score—four times ought's an ought, four times two's an eight—eighty. Oh! why—why—why—didn't he live to four times ought's an ought, and four times two's an eight, eighty?"

"Ah! what a wale of grief!" cried Mrs. Gamp, possessing herself of the bottle and glass.

"Why did he die before his poor old, crazy servant!" said Chuffey, clasping his hands and looking up in anguish. "Take him from me, and what remains?"

"Mr. Jonas," returned Pecksniff, "Mr. Jonas, my good friend."

"I loved him," cried the old man, weeping. "He was good to me. We learnt Tare and Tret together, at school. I took him down once, six boys, in the arithmetic class. God forgive me! Had I the heart to take him down!"

"Come, Mr. Chuffey," said Pecksniff, "come with me. Summon up your fortitude, Mr. Chuffey."

"Yes, I will," returned the old clerk. "Yes. I'll sum up my forty—How many times forty—Oh, Chuzzlewit and Son—Your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit; your own son, sir!"

He yielded to the hand that guided him, as he lapsed into this familiar expression, and submitted to be led away. Mrs. Gamp, with the bottle on one knee, and the glass on the other, sat upon a stool, shaking her head for a long time, until, in a moment of abstraction, she poured out a dram of spirits, and raised it to her lips. It was succeeded by a second, and by a third, and then her eyes—either in the sadness of her reflections upon life and death, or in her admiration of the liquor—were so turned up, as to be quite invisible. But she shook her head still.

Poor Chuffey was conducted to his accustomed corner, and there he remained, silent and quiet, save at long intervals, when he would rise, and walk about the room, and wring his hands, or raise some strange and sudden cry. For a whole week they all three sat about the hearth and never stirred abroad. Mr. Pecksniff would have walked out in the evening time, but Jonas was so averse to his being absent for a minute, that he abandoned the idea, and so, from morning until night, they brooded together in the dark room, without relief or occupation.

The weight of that which was stretched out, stiff and stark, in the awful chamber above-stairs, so crushed and bore down Jonas, that he

bent beneath the load. During the whole long seven days and nights, he was always oppressed and haunted by a dreadful sense of its presence in the house. Did the door move, he looked towards it with a livid face and starting eye, as if he fully believed that ghostly fingers clutched the handle. Did the fire flicker in a draught of air, he glanced over his shoulder, as almost dreading to behold some shrouded figure fanning and flapping at it with its fearful dress. The lightest noise disturbed him; and once, in the night, at the sound of a footstep overhead, he cried out that the dead man was walking—tramp, tramp, tramp,—about his coffin.

He lay at night upon a mattress on the floor of the sitting-room; his own chamber having been assigned to Mrs. Gamp; and Mr. Pecksniff was similarly accommodated. The howling of a dog before the house filled him with a terror he could not disguise. He avoided the reflection in the opposite windows of the light that burned above, as though it had been an angry eye. He often, in every night, rose up from his fitful sleep, and looked and longed for dawn; all directions and arrangements, even to the ordering of their daily meals, he abandoned to Mr. Pecksniff. That excellent gentleman, deeming that the mourner wanted comfort, and that high feeding was likely to do him infinite service, availed himself of these opportunities to such good purpose that they kept quite a dainty table during this melancholy season; with sweet-breads, stewed kidneys, oysters, and other such light viands for supper every night; over which, and sundry jorums of hot punch, Mr. Pecksniff delivered such moral reflections and spiritual consolation as might have converted a Heathen—especially if he had had but an imperfect acquaintance with the English tongue.

Nor did Mr. Pecksniff alone indulge in the creature comforts during this sad time. Mrs. Gamp proved to be very choice in her eating, and repudiated hash mutton with scorn. In her drinking too, she was very punctual and particular, requiring a pint of mild porter at lunch, a pint at dinner, half-a-pint as a species of stay or holdfast between dinner and tea, and a pint of the celebrated staggering ale, or Real Old Brighton Tipper, at supper; besides the bottle on the chimney-piece, and such casual invitations to refresh herself with wine as the good-breeding of her employers might prompt them to offer. In like manner, Mr. Mould's men found it necessary to drown their grief, like a young kitten in the morning of its existence; for which reason they generally fuddled themselves before they began to do anything,

lest it should make head and get the better of them. In short, the whole of that strange week was a round of dismal joviality and grim enjoyment; and every one, except poor Chuffey, who came within the shadow of Anthony Chuzzlewit's grave, feasted like a Ghoule.

At length the day of the funeral, pious and truthful ceremony that it was, arrived. Mr. Mould, with a glass of generous port between his eye and the light, leaned against the desk in the little glass office with his gold watch in his unoccupied hand, and conversed with Mrs. Gamp; two mutes were at the house-door, looking as mournful as could be reasonably expected of men with such a thriving job in hand; the whole of Mr. Mould's establishment were on duty within the house or without; feathers waved, horses snorted, silks and velvets fluttered: in a word, as Mr. Mould emphatically said, "everything that money could do was done."

"And what can do more, Mrs. Gamp?" exclaimed the undertaker, as he emptied his glass, and smacked his lips.

"Nothing in the world, sir."

"Nothing in the world," repeated Mr. Mould. "You are right, Mrs. Gamp. Why do people spend more money"—here he filled his glass again—"upon a death, Mrs. Gamp, than upon a birth? Come, that's in your way; you ought to know. How do you account for that now?"

"Perhaps it is because an undertaker's charges comes dearer than a nurse's charges, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, tittering, and smoothing down her new black dress with her hands.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Mould. "You have been breakfasting at somebody's expense this morning, Mrs. Gamp." But seeing, by the aid of a little shaving-glass which hung opposite, that he looked merry, he composed his features and became sorrowful.

"Many's the time that I've not breakfasted at my own expense along of your kind recommending, sir; and many's the time I hope to do the same in time to come," said Mrs. Gamp, with an apologetic curtsy.

"So be it," replied Mr. Mould, "please Providence. No, Mrs. Gamp; I'll tell you why it is. It's because the laying out of the money with a well-conducted establishment, where the thing is performed upon the very best scale, binds the broken heart, and sheds balm upon the wounded spirit. Hearts want binding, and spirits want balm when people die: not when people are born. Look at this gentleman today; look at him."

"An open-handed gentleman!" cried Mrs. Gamp, with enthusiasm.

"No, no," said the undertaker; "not an open-handed gentleman in general, by any means. There you mistake him: but an afflicted gentleman, an affectionate gentleman, who knows what it is in the power of money to do, in giving him relief, and in testifying his love and veneration for the departed. It can give him," said Mr. Mould, waving his watch-chain slowly round and round, so that he described one circle after every item; "it can give him four horses to each vehicle; it can give him velvet trappings; it can give him drivers in cloth cloaks and top-boots; it can give him the plumage of the ostrich, dyed black; it can give him any number of walking attendants, dressed in the first style of funeral fashion, and carrying batons tipped with brass; it can give him a handsome tomb; it can give him a place in Westminster Abbey itself, if he choose to invest it in such a purchase. Oh! do not let us say that gold is dross, when it can buy such things as these, Mrs. Gamp."

"But what a blessing, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, "that there are such as you, to sell or let 'em out on hire!"

"Ay, Mrs. Gamp, you are right," rejoined the undertaker. "We should be an honoured calling. We do good by stealth, and blush to have it mentioned in our little bills. How much consolation may I—even I"—cried Mr. Mould, "have diffused among my fellow-creatures by means of my four long-tailed prancers, never harnessed under ten pound ten!"

Mrs. Gamp had begun to make a suitable reply, when she was interrupted by the appearance of one of Mr. Mould's assistants—his chief mourner in fact—an obese person, with his waistcoat in closer connection with his legs than is quite reconcilable with the established ideas of grace: with that cast of feature which is figuratively called a bottle-nose; and with a face covered all over with pimples. He had been a tender plant once upon a time, but from constant blowing in the fat atmosphere of funerals, had run to seed.

"Well, Tacker," said Mr. Mould, "is all ready below?"

"A beautiful show, sir," rejoined Tacker. "The horses are prouder and fresher than ever I see 'em; and toss their heads, they do, as if they knowed how much their plumes cost. One, two, three, four," said Mr. Tacker, heaping that number of black cloaks upon his left arm.

"Is Tom there, with the cake and wine?" asked Mr. Mould.

"Ready to come in at a moment's notice, sir," said Tacker.

"Then," rejoined Mr. Mould, putting up his watch, and glancing at himself in the little shaving-glass, that he might be sure his face had the right expression on it: "then I think we may proceed to business. Give me the paper of gloves, Tacker. Ah what a man he was! Ah Tacker, Tacker, what a man he was!"

Mr. Tacker, who from his great experience in the performance of funerals, would have made an excellent pantomime actor, winked at Mrs. Gamp without at all disturbing the gravity of his countenance, and followed his master into the next room.

It was a great point with Mr. Mould, and a part of his professional tact, not to seem to know the doctor—though in reality they were near neighbours, and very often, as in the present instance, worked together. So he advanced to fit on his black kid gloves as if he had never seen him in all his life; while the doctor, on his part, looked as distant and unconscious as if he had heard and read of undertakers, and had passed their shops, but had never before been brought into communication with one.

"Gloves, eh?" said the doctor. "Mr. Pecksniff, after you."

"I couldn't think of it," returned Mr. Pecksniff.

"You are very good," said the doctor, taking a pair. "Well, sir, as I was saying—I was called up to attend that case at about half-past one o'clock. Cake and wine, eh? which is port? Thank you."

Mr. Pecksniff took some also.

"At about half-past one o'clock in the morning, sir," resumed the doctor, "I was called up to attend that case. At the first pull of the night-bell I turned out, threw up the window, and put out my head. Cloak, eh? Don't tie it too tight. That'll do."

Mr. Pecksniff having been likewise inducted into a similar garment, the doctor resumed.

"And put out my head—hat, eh? My good friend, that is not mine. Mr. Pecksniff, I beg your pardon, but I think we have unintentionally made an exchange. Thank you. Well, sir, I was going to tell you—"

"We are quite ready," interrupted Mould in a low voice.

"Ready, eh?" said the doctor. "Very good. Mr. Pecksniff, I'll take an opportunity of relating the rest in the coach. It's rather curious. Ready, eh? No rain, I hope?"

"Quite fair, sir," returned Mould.

"I was afraid the ground would have been

wet," said the doctor, "for my glass fell yesterday. We may congratulate ourselves upon our good fortune." But seeing by this time that Mr. Jonas and Chuffey were going out at the door, he put a white pocket-handkerchief to his face as if a violent burst of grief had suddenly come upon him, and walked down side by side with Mr. Pecksniff.

Mr. Mould and his men had not exaggerated the grandeur of the arrangements. They were splendid. The four hearse-horses, especially, reared and pranced, and showed their highest action, as if they knew a man was dead, and triumphed in it. "They break us, drive us, ride us; ill-treat, abuse, and maim us for their pleasure—But they die; Hurrah, they die!"

So through the narrow streets and winding city ways, went Anthony Chuzzlewit's funeral: Mr. Jonas glancing stealthily out of the coach-window now and then, to observe its effect upon the crowd; Mr. Mould as he walked along, listening with a sober pride to the exclamations of the bystanders; the doctor whispering his story to Mr. Pecksniff, without appearing to come any nearer the end of it; and poor old Chuffey sobbing unregarded in the corner. But he had greatly scandalised Mr. Mould at an early stage of the ceremony by carrying his handkerchief in his hat in a perfectly informal manner, and wiping his eyes with his knuckles. And as Mr. Mould himself had said already, his behaviour was indecent, and quite unworthy of such an occasion; and he never ought to have been there.

There he was, however; and in the churchyard there he was, also, conducting himself in a no less unbecoming manner, and leaning for support on Tacker, who plainly told him that he was fit for nothing better than a walking funeral. But Chuffey, Heaven help him! heard no sound but the echoes, lingering in his own heart, of a voice for ever silent.

"I loved him," cried the old man, sinking down upon the grave when all was done. "He was very good to me. Oh, my dear old friend and master!"

"Come, come, Mr. Chuffey," said the doctor, "this won't do; it's a clayey soil, Mr. Chuffey. You mustn't really."

"If it had been the commonest thing we do, and Mr. Chuffey had been a Bearer, gentlemen," said Mould, casting an imploring glance upon them, as he helped to raise him, "he couldn't have gone on worse than this."

"Be a man, Mr. Chuffey," said Pecksniff.

"Be a gentleman, Mr. Chuffey," said Mould.

"Upon my word, my good friend," murmured

the doctor, in a tone of stately reproof, as he stepped up to the old man's side, "this is worse than weakness. This is bad, selfish, very wrong, Mr. Chuffey. You should take example from others, my good sir. You forget that you were not connected by ties of blood with our deceased friend; and that he had a very near and very dear relation, Mr. Chuffey."

"Ay, his own son!" cried the old man, clasping his hands with remarkable passion. "His own, own, only son!"

"He's not right in his head, you know," said Jonas, turning pale. "You're not to mind anything he says. I shouldn't wonder if he was to talk some precious nonsense. But don't you mind him, any of you. I don't. My father left him to my charge; and whatever he says or does, that's enough. I'll take care of him."

A hum of admiration rose from the mourners (including Mr. Mould and his merry men) at this new instance of magnanimity and kind feeling on the part of Jonas. But Chuffey put it to the test no farther. He said not a word more, and being left to himself for a little while, crept back again to the coach.

It has been said that Mr. Jonas turned pale when the behaviour of the old clerk attracted general attention; his discomposure, however, was but momentary, and he soon recovered. But these were not the only changes he had exhibited that day. The curious eyes of Mr. Pecksniff had observed that as soon as they left the house upon their mournful errand, he began to mend; that as the ceremonies proceeded he gradually, by little and little, recovered his old condition, his old looks, his old bearing, his old agreeable characteristics of speech and manner, and became, in all respects, his old pleasant self. And now that they were seated in the coach on their return home; and more when they got there, and found the windows open, the light and air admitted, and all traces of the late event removed; he felt so well convinced that Jonas was again the Jonas he had known a week ago, and not the Jonas of the intervening time, that he voluntarily gave up his recently-acquired power without one faint attempt to exercise it, and at once fell back into his former position of mild and deferential guest.

Mrs. Gamp went home to the bird-fancier's, and was knocked up again that very night for a birth of twins; Mr. Mould dined gaily in the bosom of his family, and passed the evening facetiously at his club; the hearse, after standing for a long time at the door of a roystering public-house, repaired to its stables with the feathers inside and twelve red-nosed under-

takers on the roof, each holding on by a dingy peg, to which, in times of state, a waving plume was fitted; the various trappings of sorrow were carefully laid by in presses for the next hirer; the fiery steeds were quenched and quiet in their stalls; the doctor got merry with wine at a wedding-dinner, and forgot the middle of the story which had no end to it; the pageant of a few short hours ago was written nowhere half so legibly as in the undertaker's books.

Not in the churchyard? Not even there. The gates were closed; the night was dark and wet; and the rain fell silently among the stagnant weeds and nettles. One new mound was there which had not been last night. Time, burrowing like a mole below the ground, had marked his track by throwing up another heap of earth. And that was all.

CHAPTER XX.

IS A CHAPTER OF LOVE.

PECKSNIFF," said Jonas, taking off his hat, to see that the black crape band was all right; and finding that it was, putting it on again, complacently; "what do you mean to give your daughters when they marry?"

"My dear Mr. Jonas," cried the affectionate parent, with an ingenuous smile, "what a very singular inquiry!"

"Now, don't you mind whether it's a singular inquiry or a plural one," retorted Jonas, eyeing Mr. Pecksniff with no great favour, "but answer it, or let it alone. One or the other."

"Hum! The question, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, laying his hand tenderly upon his kinsman's knee, "is involved with many considerations. What would I give them? Eh?"

"Ah! what would you give 'em?" repeated Jonas.

"Why, that," said Mr. Pecksniff, "would naturally depend in a great measure upon the kind of husbands they might choose, my dear young friend."

Mr. Jonas was evidently disconcerted, and at a loss how to proceed. It was a good answer. It seemed a deep one, but such is the wisdom of simplicity!

"My standard for the merits I would require in a son-in-law," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a short silence, "is a high one. Forgive me, my dear Mr. Jonas," he added, greatly moved, "if

I say that you have spoiled me, and made it a fanciful one; an imaginative one; a prismatically tinged one, if I may be permitted to call it so."

"What do you mean by that?" growled Jonas, looking at him with increased disfavour.

"Indeed, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, "you may well inquire. The heart is not always a royal mint, with patent machinery, to work its metal into current coin. Sometimes it throws it out in strange forms, not easily recognised as coin at all. But it is sterling gold. It has at least that merit. It is sterling gold."

"Is it?" grumbled Jonas, with a doubtful shake of the head.

"Ay!" said Mr. Pecksniff, warming with his subject, "it is. To be plain with you, Mr. Jonas, if I could find two such sons-in-law as you will one day make to some deserving man, capable of appreciating a nature such as yours, I would—forgetful of myself—bestow upon my daughters, portions reaching to the very utmost limit of my means."

This was strong language, and it was earnestly delivered. But who can wonder that such a man as Mr. Pecksniff, after all he had seen and heard of Mr. Jonas, should be strong and earnest upon such a theme; a theme that touched even the worldly lips of undertakers with the honey of eloquence!

Mr. Jonas was silent, and looked thoughtfully at the landscape. For they were seated on the outside of the coach, at the back, and were travelling down into the country. He accompanied Mr. Pecksniff home for a few days' change of air and scene after his recent trials.

"Well," he said at last, with captivating bluntness, "suppose you got one such son-in-law as me, what then?"

Mr. Pecksniff regarded him at first with inexpressible surprise; then gradually breaking into a sort of dejected vivacity, said:

"Then well I know whose husband he would be!"

"Whose?" asked Jonas, drily.

"My eldest girl's, Mr. Jonas," replied Pecksniff, with moistening eyes. "My dear Cherry's: my staff, my scrip, my treasure, Mr. Jonas. A hard struggle, but it is in the nature of things! I must one day part with her to a husband. I know it, my dear friend. I am prepared for it."

"Ecod! you've been prepared for that a pretty long time, I should think," said Jonas.

"Many have sought to bear her from me," said Mr. Pecksniff. "All have failed. 'I never

will give my hand, papa,'—those were her words, 'unless my heart is won.' She has not been quite so happy as she used to be, of late. I don't know why."

Again Mr. Jonas looked at the landscape; then at the coachman; then at the luggage on the roof; finally at Mr. Pecksniff.

"I suppose you'll have to part with the other one, some of these days?" he observed, as he caught that gentleman's eye.

"Probably," said the parent. "Years will tame down the wildness of my foolish bird, and then it will be caged. But Cherry, Mr. Jonas, Cherry—"

"Oh, ah!" interrupted Jonas. "Years have made her all right enough. Nobody doubts that. But you haven't answered what I asked you. Of course, you're not obliged to do it, you know, if you don't like. You're the best judge."

There was a warning sulkiness in the manner of this speech, which admonished Mr. Pecksniff that his dear friend was not to be trifled with or fenced off, and that he must either return a straightforward reply to his question, or plainly give him to understand that he declined to enlighten him upon the subject to which it referred. Mindful in this dilemma of the caution old Anthony had given him almost with his latest breath, he resolved to speak to the point, and so told Mr. Jonas—enlarging upon the communication as a proof of his great attachment and confidence—that in the case he had put, to wit, in the event of such a man as he proposing for his daughter's hand, he would endow her with a fortune of four thousand pounds.

"I should sadly pinch and cramp myself to do so," was his fatherly remark; "but that would be my duty, and my conscience would reward me. For myself, my conscience is my bank. I have a trifle invested there—a mere trifle, Mr. Jonas—but I prize it as a store of value, I assure you."

The good man's enemies would have divided upon this question into two parties. One would have asserted without scruple that if Mr. Pecksniff's conscience were his bank, and he kept a running account there, he must have overdrawn it beyond all mortal means of computation. The other would have contended that it was a mere fictitious form; a perfectly blank book; or one in which entries were only made with a peculiar kind of invisible ink to become legible at some indefinite time; and that he never troubled it at all.

"It would sadly pinch and cramp me, my dear friend," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, "but Providence—perhaps I may be permitted to

say a special Providence—has blessed my endeavours, and I could guarantee to make the sacrifice."

A question of philosophy arises here, whether Mr. Pecksniff had or had not good reason to say, that he was specially patronised and encouraged in his undertakings. All his life long he had been walking up and down the narrow ways and bye-places, with a hook in one hand and a crook in the other, scraping all sorts of valuable odds and ends into his pouch. Now, there being a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow, it follows (so Mr. Pecksniff, and only such admirable men, would have reasoned), that there must also be a special Providence in the alighting of the stone, or stick, or other substance which is aimed at the sparrow. And Mr. Pecksniff's hook, or crook, having invariably knocked the sparrow on the head and brought him down, that gentleman may have been led to consider himself as specially licensed to bag sparrows, and as being specially seised and possessed of all the birds he had got together. That many undertakings, national as well as individual—but especially the former—are held to be specially brought to a glorious and successful issue, which never could be so regarded on any other process of reasoning, must be clear to all men. Therefore the precedents would seem to show that Mr. Pecksniff had (as things go) good argument for what he said, and might be permitted to say it, and did not say it presumptuously, vainly, or arrogantly, but in a spirit of high faith and great wisdom.

Mr. Jonas, not being much accustomed to perplex his mind with theories of this nature, expressed no opinion on the subject. Nor did he receive his companion's announcement with one solitary syllable, good, bad, or indifferent. He preserved this taciturnity for a quarter of an hour at least, and during the whole of that time appeared to be steadily engaged in subjecting some given amount to the operation of every known rule in figures; adding to it, taking from it, multiplying it, reducing it by long and short division; working it by the rule-of-three direct and inverse; exchange or barter; practice; simple interest; compound interest; and other means of arithmetical calculation. The result of these labours appeared to be satisfactory, for when he did break silence, it was as one who had arrived at some specific result, and freed himself from a state of distressing uncertainty.

"Come, old Pecksniff;"—such was his jocose address, as he slapped that gentleman on the back, at the end of the stage—"let's have something!"

"With all my heart," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"Let's treat the driver," cried Jonas.

"If you think it won't hurt the man, or render him discontented with his station—certainly," faltered Mr. Pecksniff.

Jonas only laughed at this, and getting down from the coach-top with great alacrity, cut a cumbersome kind of caper in the road. After which, he went into the public-house, and there ordered spirituous drink to such an extent that Mr. Pecksniff had some doubts of his perfect sanity, until Jonas set them quite at rest by saying, when the coach could wait no longer:

"I've been standing treat for a whole week and more, and letting you have all the delicacies of the season. *You* shall pay for this, Pecksniff." It was not a joke either, as Mr. Pecksniff at first supposed; for he went off to the coach without further ceremony, and left his respected victim to settle the bill.

But Mr. Pecksniff was a man of meek endurance, and Mr. Jonas was his friend. Moreover, his regard for that gentleman was founded, as we know, on pure esteem, and a knowledge of the excellence of his character. He came out from the tavern with a smiling face, and even



"AH! I DON'T MIND 'YOUR' PINCHING," GRINNED JONAS, "A BIT."

went so far as to repeat the performance, on a less expensive scale, at the next ale-house. There was a certain wildness in the spirits of Mr. Jonas (not usually a part of his character) which was far from being subdued by these means, and, for the rest of the journey, he was so very buoyant—it may be said, boisterous—that Mr. Pecksniff had some difficulty in keeping pace with him.

They were not expected—oh dear, no! Mr. Pecksniff had proposed in London to give the girls a surprise, and had said he wouldn't write

a word to prepare them on any account, in order that he and Mr. Jonas might take them unawares, and just see what they were doing, when they thought their dear papa was miles and miles away. As a consequence of this playful device, there was nobody to meet them at the finger-post, but that was of small consequence, for they had come down by the day coach, and Mr. Pecksniff had only a carpet-bag, while Mr. Jonas had only a portmanteau. They took the portmanteau between them, put the bag upon it, and walked off up the lane without delay: Mr.

Pecksniff already going on tiptoe, as if, without this precaution, his fond children, being then at a distance of a couple of miles or so, would have some filial sense of his approach.

It was a lovely evening, in the spring-time of the year; and in the soft stillness of the twilight, all nature was very calm and beautiful. The day had been fine and warm; but at the coming on of night, the air grew cool, and in the mellowing distance, smoke was rising gently from the cottage chimneys. There were a thousand pleasant scents diffused around, from young leaves and fresh buds: the cuckoo had been singing all day long, and was but just now hushed; the smell of earth, newly-upturned—first breath of hope to the first labourer, after his garden withered—was fragrant in the evening breeze. It was a time when most men cherish good resolves, and sorrow for the wasted past; when most men, looking on the shadows as they gather, think of that evening which must close on all, and that to-morrow which has none beyond.

"Precious dull," said Mr. Jonas, looking about. "It's enough to make a man go melancholy mad."

"We shall have lights and a fire soon," observed Mr. Pecksniff.

"We shall need 'em by the time we get there," said Jonas. "Why the devil don't you talk? What are you thinking of?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Jonas," said Pecksniff with great solemnity, "my mind was running at that moment on our late dear friend, your departed father."

Mr. Jonas immediately let his burden fall, and said, threatening him with his hand:

"Drop that, Pecksniff!"

Mr. Pecksniff not exactly knowing whether allusion was made to the subject or the portmanteau, stared at his friend in unaffected surprise.

"Drop it, I say!" cried Jonas, fiercely. "Do you hear? Drop it—now and for ever. You had better, I give you notice!"

"It was quite a mistake," urged Mr. Pecksniff, very much dismayed; "though I admit it was foolish. I might have known it was a tender string."

"Don't talk to me about tender strings," said Jonas. "I'm not going to be crowed over by you, because I don't like dead company."

Mr. Pecksniff had got out the words "Crowed over, Mr. Jonas!" when that young man, with a dark expression in his countenance, cut him short once more:

"Mind!" he said, "I won't have it. I advise

you not to revive the subject, neither to me nor anybody else. You can take a hint, if you choose, as well as another man. There's enough said about it. Come along!"

Taking up his part of the load again, when he had said these words, he hurried on so fast that Mr. Pecksniff, at the other end of the portmanteau, found himself dragged forward in a very inconvenient and ungraceful manner, to the great detriment of what is called by fancy gentlemen "the bark" upon his shins, which were most unmercifully bumped against the hard leather and the iron buckles. In the course of a few minutes, however, Mr. Jonas relaxed his speed, and suffered his companion to come up with him, and to bring the portmanteau into a tolerably straight position.

It was pretty clear that he regretted his late outbreak, and that he mistrusted its effect on Mr. Pecksniff; for as often as that gentleman glanced towards Mr. Jonas, he found Mr. Jonas glancing at him, which was a new source of embarrassment. It was but a short-lived one though, for Mr. Jonas soon began to whistle, whereupon Mr. Pecksniff, taking his cue from his friend, began to hum a tune melodiously.

"Pretty nearly there, ain't we?" said Jonas, when this had lasted some time.

"Close, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"What'll they be doing, do you suppose?" asked Jonas.

"Impossible to say," cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Giddy truants! They may be away from home, perhaps. I was going to—he! he! he!—I was going to propose," said Mr. Pecksniff, "that we should enter by the back way, and come upon them like a clap of thunder, Mr. Jonas."

It might not have been easy to decide in respect of which of their manifold properties, Jonas, Mr. Pecksniff, the carpet-bag, and the portmanteau, could be likened to a clap of thunder. But Mr. Jonas giving his assent to this proposal, they stole round into the back yard, and softly advanced towards the kitchen window, through which the mingled light of fire and candle shone upon the darkening night.

Truly Mr. Pecksniff is blessed in his children—in one of them, at any rate. The prudent Cherry—staff and scrip, and treasure of her doting father—there she sits, at a little table white as driven snow, before the kitchen fire, making up accounts! See the neat maiden, as with pen in hand, and calculating look addressed towards the ceiling, and bunch of keys within a little basket at her side, she checks the house-keeping expenditure! From flat-iron, dish-cover,

and warming-pan ; from pot and kettle, face of brass footman, and black-leaded stove ; bright glances of approbation wink and glow upon her. The very onions dangling from the beam mantle and shine like cherubs' cheeks. Something of the influence of those vegetables sinks into Mr. Pecksniff's nature. He weeps.

It is but for a moment, and he hides it from the observation of his friend—very carefully—by a somewhat elaborate use of his pocket-handkerchief, in fact : for he would not have his weakness known.

"Pleasant," he murmured—"pleasant to a father's feelings ! My dear girl ! Shall we let her know we are here, Mr. Jonas ?"

"Why, I suppose you don't mean to spend the evening in the stable or the coach-house," he returned.

"That, indeed, is not such hospitality as I would show to *you*, my friend," cried Mr. Pecksniff, pressing his hand. And then he took a long breath, and tapping at the window, shouted with stentorian blandness :

"Boh !"

Cherry dropped her pen and screamed. But innocence is ever bold—or should be. As they opened the door, the valiant girl exclaimed in a firm voice, and with a presence of mind which even in that trying moment did not desert her, "Who are you ? What do you want ? Speak ! or I will call my Pa."

Mr. Pecksniff held out his arms. She knew him instantly, and rushed into his fond embrace.

"It was thoughtless of us, Mr. Jonas, it was very thoughtless," said Pecksniff, smoothing his daughter's hair. "My darling, do you see that I am not alone !"

Not she. She had seen nothing but her father until now. She saw Mr. Jonas now, though ; and blushed, and hung her head down, as she gave him welcome.

But where was Merry ? Mr. Pecksniff didn't ask the question in reproach, but in a vein of mildness touched with a gentle sorrow. She was up-stairs, reading on the parlour couch. Ah ! Domestic details had no charms for *her*. "But call her down," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a placid resignation. "Call her down, my love."

She was called and came, all flushed and tumbled from reposing on the sofa ; but none the worse for that. No, not at all. Rather the better, if anything.

"Oh my goodness me !" cried the arch girl, turning to her cousin when she had kissed her father on both cheeks, and in her frolicsome nature had bestowed a supernumerary salute upon the tip of his nose, "*you* here, fright !

Well, I'm very thankful that you won't trouble *me* much !"

"What ! you're as lively as ever, are you ?" said Jonas. "Oh ! You're a wicked one !"

"There, go along !" retorted Merry, pushing him away. "I'm sure I don't know what I shall ever do, if I have to see much of you. Go along, for gracious sake !"

Mr. Pecksniff striking in here, with a request that Mr. Jonas would immediately walk up-stairs, he so far complied with the young lady's adjuration as to go at once. But though he had the fair Cherry on his arm, he could not help looking back at her sister, and exchanging some further dialogue of the same bantering description, as they all four ascended to the parlour ; where—for the young ladies happened, by good fortune, to be a little later than usual that night—the tea-board was at that moment being set out.

Mr. Pinch was not at home, so they had it all to themselves, and were very snug and talkative, Jonas sitting between the two sisters, and displaying his gallantry in that engaging manner which was peculiar to him. It was a hard thing, Mr. Pecksniff said, when tea was done, and cleared away, to leave so pleasant a little party, but having some important papers to examine in his own apartment, he must beg them to excuse him for half an hour. With this apology he withdrew, singing a careless strain as he went. He had not been gone five minutes, when Merry, who had been sitting in the window, apart from Jonas and her sister, burst into a half-smothered laugh, and skipped towards the door.

"Hallo !" cried Jonas. "Don't go."

"Oh, I dare say !" rejoined Merry, looking back. "You're ver' anxious I should stay, fright, ain't you ?"

"Yes, I am," said Jonas. "Upon my word I am. I want to speak to you." But as she left the room notwithstanding, he ran out after her, and brought her back, after a short struggle in the passage which scandalised Miss Cherry very much.

"Upon my word, Merry," urged that young lady, "I wonder at you ! There are bounds even to absurdity, my dear."

"Thank you, my sweet," said Merry, pursing up her rosy lips. "Much obliged to it for its advice. Oh ! do leave me alone, you monster, do !" This entreaty was wrung from her by a new proceeding on the part of Mr. Jonas, who pulled her down, all breathless as she was, into a seat beside him on the sofa, having at the same time Miss Cherry upon the other side.

"Now," said Jonas, clasping the waist of each : "I have got both arms full, haven't I?"

"One of them will be black and blue to-morrow, if you don't let me go," cried the playful Merry.

"Ah! I don't mind *your* pinching," grinned Jonas, "a bit."

"Pinch him for me, Cherry, pray," said Mercy. "I never did hate anybody so much as I hate this creature, I declare!"

"No, no, don't say that," urged Jonas, "and don't pinch either, because I want to be serious. I say—Cousin Charity—"

"Well! what?" she answered sharply.

"I want to have some sober talk," said Jonas: "I want to prevent any mistakes, you know, and to put everything upon a pleasant understanding. That's desirable and proper, ain't it?"

Neither of the sisters spoke a word. Mr. Jonas paused and cleared his throat, which was very dry.

"She'll not believe what I'm going to say, will she, cousin?" said Jonas, timidly squeezing Miss Charity.

"Really, Mr. Jonas, I don't know, until I hear what it is. It's quite impossible!"

"Why, you see," said Jonas, "her way always being to make game of people, I know she'll laugh, or pretend to—I know that beforehand. But you can tell her I'm in earnest, cousin; can't you? You'll confess you know, won't you? You'll be honourable, I'm sure," he added persuasively.

No answer. His throat seemed to grow hotter and hotter, and to be more and more difficult of control.

"You see, Cousin Charity," said Jonas, "nobody but you can tell her what pains I took to get into her company when you were both at the boarding-house in the city, because nobody's so well aware of it, you know. Nobody else can tell her how hard I tried to get to know you better, in order that I might get to know her without seeming to wish it; can they? I always asked you about her, and said where had she gone, and when would she come, and how lively she was, and all that; didn't I, cousin? I know you'll tell her so, if you haven't told her so already, and—and—I dare say you have, because I'm sure you're honourable, ain't you?"

Still not a word. The right arm of Mr. Jonas—the elder sister sat upon his right—may have been sensible of some tumultuous throbbing which was not within itself; but nothing else apprised him that his words had had the least effect.

"Even if you kept it to yourself, and haven't told her," resumed Jonas. "it don't much matter, because you'll bear honest witness now; won't you? We've been very good friends from the first; haven't we? and of course we shall be quite friends in future, and so I don't mind speaking before you a bit. Cousin Mercy, you've heard what I've been saying. She'll confirm it, every word; she must. Will you have me for your husband? Eh?"

As he released his hold of Charity, to put this question with better effect, she started up and hurried away to her own room, marking her progress as she went by such a train of passionate and incoherent sound, as nothing but a slighted woman in her anger could produce.

"Let me go away. Let me go after her," said Merry, pushing him off, and giving him—to tell the truth—more than one sounding slap upon his outstretched face.

"Not till you say yes. You haven't told me. Will you have me for your husband?"

"No, I won't. I can't bear the sight of you. I have told you so a hundred times. You are a fright. Besides, I always thought you liked my sister best. We all thought so."

"But that wasn't my fault," said Jonas.

"Yes, it was; you know it was."

"Any trick is fair in love," said Jonas. "She may have thought I liked her best, but you didn't."

"I did!"

"No, you didn't. You never could have thought I liked her best, when you were by."

"There's no accounting for tastes," said Merry; "at least I didn't mean to say that. I don't know what I mean. Let me go to her."

"Say 'Yes,' and then I will."

"If I ever brought myself to say so, it should only be, that I might hate and tease you all my life."

"That's as good," cried Jonas, "as saying it right out. It's a bargain, cousin. We're a pair, if ever there was one."

This gallant speech was succeeded by a confused noise of kissing and slapping; and then the fair, but much dishevelled Merry broke away, and followed in the footsteps of her sister.

Now whether Mr. Pecksniff had been listening—which in one of his character appears impossible: or divined almost by inspiration what the matter was—which in a man of his sagacity is far more probable: or happened by sheer good fortune to find himself in exactly the right place, at precisely the right time—which, under the special guardianship in which he lived might very reasonably happen; it is quite

certain that at the moment when the sisters came together in their own room, he appeared at the chamber door. And a marvellous contrast it was—they so heated, noisy, and vehement; he so calm, so self-possessed, so cool and full of peace, that not a hair upon his head was stirred.

“Children!” said Mr. Pecksniff, spreading out his hands in wonder, but not before he had shut the door, and set his back against it. “Girls! Daughters! What is this?”

“The wretch; the apostate; the false, mean, odious villain; has before my very face proposed to Mercy!” was his elder daughter’s answer.

“Who has proposed to Mercy?” said Mr. Pecksniff.

“*He* has. That thing, Jonas, down-stairs.”

“Jonas proposed to Mercy?” said Mr. Pecksniff. “Aye, aye! Indeed!”

“Have you nothing else to say?” cried Charity. “Am I to be driven mad, papa? He has proposed to Mercy, not to me.”

“Oh, fie! For shame!” said Mr. Pecksniff, gravely. “Oh, for shame! Can a triumph of a sister move you to this terrible display, my child? Oh, really this is very sad! I am sorry; I am surprised and hurt to see you so. Mercy, my girl, bless you! See to her. Ah, envy, envy, what a passion you are!”

Uttering this apostrophe in a tone full of grief and lamentation, Mr. Pecksniff left the room (taking care to shut the door behind him), and walked down-stairs into the parlour. There he found his intended son-in-law, whom he seized by both hands.

“Jonas!” cried Mr. Pecksniff. “Jonas! the dearest wish of my heart is now fulfilled!”

“Very well; I’m glad to hear it,” said Jonas. “That’ll do. I say, as it ain’t the one you’re so fond of, you must come down with another thousand, Pecksniff. You must make it up five. It’s worth that to keep your treasure to yourself, you know. You get off very cheap that way, and haven’t a sacrifice to make.”

The grin with which he accompanied this, set off his other attractions to such unspeakable advantage, that even Mr. Pecksniff lost his presence of mind for the moment, and looked at the young man as if he were quite stupefied with wonder and admiration. But he quickly regained his composure, and was in the very act of changing the subject, when a hasty step was heard without, and Tom Pinch, in a state of great excitement, came darting into the room.

On seeing a stranger there, apparently engaged with Mr. Pecksniff in private conversation, Tom was very much abashed, though he still looked

as if he had something of great importance to communicate, which would be a sufficient apology for his intrusion.

“Mr. Pinch,” said Pecksniff, “this is hardly decent. You will excuse my saying that I think your conduct scarcely decent, Mr. Pinch.”

“I beg your pardon, sir,” replied Tom, “for not knocking at the door.”

“Rather beg this gentleman’s pardon, Mr. Pinch,” said Pecksniff. “I know you; he does not.—My young man, Mr. Jonas.”

The son-in-law that was to be gave him a slight nod—not actively disdainful or contemptuous, only passively: for he was in a good humour.

“Could I speak a word with you, sir, if you please?” said Tom. “It’s rather pressing.”

“It should be very pressing to justify this strange behaviour, Mr. Pinch,” returned his master. “Excuse me for one moment, my dear friend. Now, sir, what is the reason of this rough intrusion?”

“I am very sorry, sir, I am sure,” said Tom, standing, cap in hand, before his patron in the passage; “and I know it must have a very rude appearance—”

“It *has* a very rude appearance, Mr. Pinch.”

“Yes, I feel that, sir; but the truth is, I was so surprised to see them, and knew you would be too, that I ran home very fast indeed, and really hadn’t enough command over myself to know what I was doing very well. I was in the church just now, sir, touching the organ for my own amusement, when I happened to look round, and saw a gentleman and lady standing in the aisle listening. They seemed to be strangers, sir, as well as I could make out in the dusk: and I thought I didn’t know them: so presently I left off, and said, would they walk up into the organ-loft, or take a seat? No, they said, they wouldn’t do that; but they thanked me for the music they had heard—in fact,” observed Tom, blushing—“they said, ‘Delicious music!’ at least *she* did; and I am sure that was a greater pleasure and honour to me, than any compliment I could have had. I—I—beg your pardon, sir;” he was all in a tremble, and dropped his hat for the second time; “but I—I’m rather flurried, and I fear I’ve wandered from the point.”

“If you will come back to it, Thomas,” said Mr. Pecksniff, with an icy look, “I shall feel obliged.”

“Yes, sir,” returned Tom, “certainly. They had a posting carriage at the porch, sir, and had stopped to hear the organ, they said, and then they said—*she* said, I mean, ‘I believe you

live with Mr. Pecksniff, sir?' I said I had that honour, and I took the liberty, sir," added Tom, raising his eyes to his benefactor's face, "of saying, as I always will and must, with your permission, that I was under great obligations to you, and never could express my sense of them sufficiently."

"That," said Mr. Pecksniff, "was very, very wrong. Take your time, Mr. Pinch."

"Thank you, sir," cried Tom. "On that they asked me—she asked, I mean—'Wasn't there a bridle-road to Mr. Pecksniff's house,—'"

Mr. Pecksniff suddenly became full of interest.

"Without going by the Dragon?' When I said there was, and said how happy I should be to show it 'em, they sent the carriage on by the road, and came with me across the meadows. I left 'em at the turnstile to run forward and tell you they were coming, and they'll be here, sir, in—in less than a minute's time, I should say," added Tom, fetching his breath with difficulty.

"Now who," said Mr. Pecksniff, pondering, "who may these people be?"

"Bless my soul, sir!" cried Tom, "I meant to mention that at first, I thought I had. I knew them—her, I mean—directly. The gentleman who was ill at the Dragon, sir, last winter; and the young lady who attended him."

Tom's teeth chattered in his head, and he positively staggered with amazement, at witnessing the extraordinary effect produced on Mr. Pecksniff by these simple words. The dread of losing the old man's favour almost as soon as they were reconciled, through the mere fact of having Jonas in the house; the impossibility of dismissing Jonas, or shutting him up, or tying him hand and foot, and putting him in the coal-cellar, without offending him beyond recall; the horrible discordance prevailing in the establishment, and the impossibility of reducing it to decent harmony, with Charity in loud hysterics, Mercy in the utmost disorder, Jonas in the parlour, and Martin Chuzzlewit and his young charge upon the very door-steps; the total hopelessness of being able to disguise or feebly explain this state of rampant confusion; the sudden accumulation over his devoted head of every complicated perplexity and entanglement—for his extrication from which he had trusted to time, good fortune, chance, and his own plotting—so filled the entrapped architect with dismay, that if Tom could have been a Gorgon staring at Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Pecksniff could have been a Gorgon staring at Tom, they could not have horrified each other half so much as in their own bewildered persons.

"Dear, dear!" cried Tom, "what have I done?"

I hoped it would be a pleasant surprise, sir. I thought you would like to know."

But at that moment a loud knocking was heard at the hall door.

CHAPTER XXI.

MORE AMERICAN EXPERIENCES. MARTIN TAKES A PARTNER, AND MAKES A PURCHASE. SOME ACCOUNT OF EDEN, AS IT APPEARED ON PAPER. ALSO OF THE BRITISH LION. ALSO OF THE KIND OF SYMPATHY PROFESSED AND ENTERTAINED, BY THE WATER-TOAST ASSOCIATION OF UNITED SYMPATHISERS.

THE knocking at Mr. Pecksniff's door, though loud enough, bore no resemblance whatever to the noise of an American railway train at full speed. It may be well to begin the present chapter with this frank admission, lest the reader should imagine that the sounds now deafening this history's ears have any connection with the knocker on Mr. Pecksniff's door, or with the great amount of agitation pretty equally divided between that worthy man and Mr. Pinch, of which its strong performance was the cause.

Mr. Pecksniff's house is more than a thousand leagues away; and again this happy chronicle has Liberty and Moral Sensibility for its high companions. Again it breathes the blessed air of Independence; again it contemplates with pious awe that moral sense which renders unto Cæsar nothing that is his; again inhales that sacred atmosphere which was the life of him—oh noble patriot, with many followers!—who dreamed of Freedom in a slave's embrace, and waking sold her offspring and his own in public markets.

How the wheels clank and rattle, and the tram-road shakes, as the train rushes on! And now the engine yells, as it were lashed and tortured like a living labourer, and writhed in agony. A poor fancy; for steel and iron are of infinitely greater account, in this commonwealth, than flesh and blood. If the cunning work of man be urged beyond its power of endurance, it has within it the elements of its own revenge; whereas the wretched mechanism of the Divine Hand is dangerous with no such property, but may be tampered with, and crushed, and broken, at the driver's pleasure. Look at that engine! It shall cost a man more dollars in the way of penalty and fine, and satisfaction of the outraged law, to deface in wantonness that senseless mass of metal, than to take the lives of twenty human creatures! Thus the stars wink

upon the bloody stripes; and Liberty pulls down her cap upon her eyes, and owns Oppression in its vilest aspect, for her sister.

The engine-driver of the train whose noise awoke us to the present chapter, was certainly troubled with no such reflections as these; nor is it very probable that his mind was disturbed by any reflections at all. He leaned with folded arms and crossed legs against the side of the carriage, smoking; and, except when he expressed, by a grunt as short as his pipe, his approval of some particularly dexterous aim on the part of his colleague, the fireman, who beguiled his leisure by throwing logs of wood from the tender at the numerous stray cattle on the line, he preserved a composure so immovable, and an indifference so complete, that if the locomotive had been a sucking-pig, he could not have been more perfectly indifferent to its doings. Notwithstanding the tranquil state of this officer, and his unbroken peace of mind, the train was proceeding with tolerable rapidity; and the rails being but poorly laid, the jolts and bumps it met with in its progress were neither slight nor few.

There were three great caravans or cars attached. The ladies' car, the gentlemen's car, and the car for negroes: the latter painted black, as an appropriate compliment to its company. Martin and Mark Tapley were in the first, as it was the most comfortable; and, being far from full, received other gentlemen who, like them, were unblessed by the society of ladies of their own. They were seated side by side, and were engaged in earnest conversation.

"And so, Mark," said Martin, looking at him with an anxious expression,—“and so you are glad we have left New York far behind us, are you?”

"Yes, sir," said Mark. "I am. Precious glad."

"Were you not 'jolly' there?" asked Martin.

"On the contrary, sir," returned Mark. "The jolliest week as ever I spent in my life, was that there week at Pawkins's."

"What do you think of our prospects?" inquired Martin, with an air that plainly said he had avoided the question for some time.

"Uncommon bright, sir," returned Mark. "Impossible for a place to have a better name, sir, than the Walley of Eden. No man couldn't think of settling in a better place than the Walley of Eden. And I'm told," added Mark after a pause, "as there's lots of serpents there, so we shall come out, quite complete and reg'lar."

So far from dwelling upon this agreeable piece of information with the least dismay, Mark's face grew radiant as he called it to mind: so very radiant, that a stranger might have supposed he had all his life been yearning for the society of serpents, and now hailed with delight the approaching consummation of his fondest wishes.

"Who told you that?" asked Martin, sternly.

"A military officer," said Mark.

"Confound you for a ridiculous fellow!" cried Martin, laughing heartily in spite of himself. "What military officer? you know they spring up in every field—"

"As thick as scarecrows in England, sir," interposed Mark, "which is a sort of militia themselves, being entirely coat and wescoat, with a stick inside. Ha, ha!—Don't mind me, sir; it's my way sometimes. I can't help being jolly.—Why it was one of them invading conquerors at Pawkins's, as told me. 'Am I rightly informed,' he says—not exactly through his nose, but as if he'd got a stoppage in it, very high up—'that you're a going to the Walley of Eden?' 'I heard some talk on it,' I told him. 'Oh!' says he, 'if you should ever happen to go to bed there—you *may*, you know,' he says, 'in course of time as civilisation progresses—don't forget to take a axe with you.' I looks at him tolerable hard. 'Fleas?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'Wampires?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'Musquitoes, perhaps?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'What more?' says I. 'Snakes more,' says he; 'rattlesnakes. You're right to a certain extent, stranger; there air some catawampous chawers in the small way too, as graze upon a human pretty strong; but don't mind *them*—they're company. It's snakes,' he says, 'as you'll object to: and whenever you wake and see one in a upright poster on your bed,' he says, 'like a corkscrew with the handle off a sittin' on its bottom ring, cut him down, for he means venom.'"

"Why didn't you tell me this before?" cried Martin, with an expression of face which set off the cheerfulness of Mark's visage to great advantage.

"I never thought on it, sir," said Mark. "It come in at one ear, and went out at the other. But Lord love us, he was one of another Company I dare say, and only made up the story that we might go to his Eden, and not the opposition one."

"There's some probability in that," observed Martin. "I can honestly say that I hope so, with all my heart."

"I've not a doubt about it, sir," returned

Mark, who, full of the inspiring influence of the anecdote upon himself, had for the moment forgotten its probable effect upon his master: "anyhow, we must live, you know, sir."

"Live!" cried Martin. "Yes, it's easy to say live; but if we should happen not to wake when rattlesnakes are making corkscrews of themselves upon our beds, it may not be so easy to do it."

"And that's a fact," said a voice so close in his ear that it tickled him. "That's dreadful true."

Martin looked round, and found that a gentleman, on the seat behind, had thrust his head between himself and Mark, and sat with his chin resting on the back rail of their little bench, entertaining himself with their conversation. He was as languid and listless in his looks, as most of the gentlemen they had seen; his cheeks were so hollow that he seemed to be always sucking them in; and the sun had burnt him—not a wholesome red or brown, but dirty yellow. He had bright dark eyes, which he kept half closed; only peeping out of the corners, and even then with a glance that seemed to say, "Now you won't overreach me: you want to, but you won't." His arms rested carelessly on his knees as he leant forward; in the palm of his left hand, as English rustics have their slice of cheese, he had a cake of tobacco; in his right a penknife. He struck into the dialogue with as little reserve as if he had been specially called in, days before, to hear the arguments on both sides, and favour them with his opinion; and he no more contemplated or cared for the possibility of their not desiring the honour of his acquaintance or interference in their private affairs, than if he had been a bear or a buffalo.

"That," he repeated, nodding condescendingly to Martin, as to an outer barbarian and foreigner, "is dreadful true. Darn all manner of vermin."

Martin could not help frowning for a moment, as if he were disposed to insinuate that the gentleman had unconsciously "darned" himself. But remembering the wisdom of doing at Rome as Romans do, he smiled with the pleasantest expression he could assume upon so short a notice.

Their new friend said no more just then, being busily employed in cutting a quid or plug from his cake of tobacco, and whistling softly to himself the while. When he had shaped it to his liking, he took out his old plug, and deposited the same on the back of the seat between Mark and Martin, while he thrust the new one into

the hollow of his cheek, where it looked like a large walnut, or tolerable pippin. Finding it quite satisfactory, he struck the point of his knife into the old plug, and holding it out for their inspection, remarked with the air of a man who had not lived in vain, that it was "used up considerable." Then he tossed it away; put his knife into one pocket and his tobacco into another; rested his chin upon the rail as before; and approving of the pattern on Martin's waistcoat, reached out his hand to feel the texture of that garment.

"What do you call this now?" he asked.

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I don't know what it's called."

"It'll cost a dollar or more a yard, I reckon?"

"I really don't know."

"In my country," said the gentleman, "we know the cost of our own pro-dūce."

Martin not discussing the question, there was a pause.

"Well!" resumed their new friend, after staring at them intently during the whole interval of silence: "how's the unnat'ral old parent by this time?"

Mr. Tapley regarding this inquiry as only another version of the impertinent English question—"How's your mother?" would have resented it instantly, but for Martin's prompt interposition.

"You mean the old country?" he said.

"Ah!" was the reply. "How's she? Progressing back'ards, I expect, as usual? Well! How's Queen Victoria?"

"In good health, I believe," said Martin.

"Queen Victoria won't shake in her royal shoes at all, when she hears to-morrow named," observed the stranger. "No."

"Not that I am aware of. Why should she?"

"She won't be taken with a-cold chill, when she realises what is being done in these diggings," said the stranger. "No."

"No," said Martin. "I think I could take my oath of that."

The strange gentleman looked at him as if in pity for his ignorance or prejudice, and said:

"Well, sir, I tell you this—there ain't a ěn-gine with its biler bust, in God A'mighty's free U-nited States, so fixed, and nipped, and frizzled to a most e-tarnal smash, as that young critter, in her luxurious lo-cation in the Tower of London, will be, when she reads the next double-extra Watertoast Gazette."

Several other gentlemen had left their seats and gathered round during the foregoing dialogue. They were highly delighted with this speech. One very lank gentleman, in a loose

limp white cravat, a long white waistcoat, and a black great-coat, who seemed to be in authority among them, felt called upon to acknowledge it.

"Hem! Mr. La Fayette Kettle," he said, taking off his hat.

There was a grave murmur of "Hush!"

"Mr. La Fayette Kettle! Sir!"

Mr. Kettle bowed.

"In the name of this company, sir, and in the name of our common country, and in the name of that righteous cause of holy sympathy

in which we are engaged, I thank you. I thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast Sympathisers; and I thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast Gazette; and I thank you, sir, in the name of the star-spangled banner of the Great United States, for your eloquent and categorical exposition. And if, sir," said the speaker, poking Martin with the handle of his umbrella to bespeak his attention, for he was listening to a whisper from Mark; "if, sir, in such a place, and at such a time, I might venture



"I WAS MERELY REMARKING, GENTLEMEN—THOUGH IT'S A POINT OF VERY LITTLE IMPORT—THAT THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND DOES NOT HAPPEN TO LIVE IN THE TOWER OF LONDON."

to conclude with a sentiment, glancing—however slantin'dicularly—at the subject in hand, I would say, sir, may the British Lion have his talons eradicated by the noble bill of the American Eagle, and be taught to play upon the Irish Harp and the Scotch Fiddle that music which is breathed in every empty shell that lies upon the shores of green Co-lumbia!"

Here the lank gentleman sat down again, amidst a great sensation; and every one looked very grave.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 12.

"General Choke," said Mr. La Fayette Kettle, "you warm my heart; sir, you warm my heart. But the British Lion is not unrepresented here, sir; and I should be glad to hear his answer to those remarks."

"Upon my word," cried Martin, laughing, "since you do me the honour to consider me his representative, I have only to say that I never heard of Queen Victoria reading the What's-his-name Gazette, and that I should scarcely think it probable."

General Choke smiled upon the rest, and said, in patient and benignant explanation:

"It is sent to her, sir. It is sent to her. Per mail."

"But if it is addressed to the Tower of London, it would hardly come to hand, I fear," returned Martin: "for she don't live there."

"The Queen of England, gentlemen," observed Mr. Tapley, affecting the greatest politeness, and regarding them with an immovable face, "usually lives in the Mint to take care of the money. She *has* lodgings, in virtue of her office, with the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House; but don't often occupy them, in consequence of the parlour chimney smoking."

"Mark," said Martin, "I shall be very much obliged to you if you'll have the goodness not to interfere with preposterous statements, however jocose they may appear to you. I was merely remarking, gentlemen—though it's a point of very little import—that the Queen of England does not happen to live in the Tower of London."

"General!" cried Mr. La Fayette Kettle. "You hear?"

"General!" echoed several others. "General!"

"Hush! Pray, silence!" said General Choke, holding up his hand, and speaking with a patient and complacent benevolence that was quite touching. "I have always remarked it as a very extraordinary circumstance, which I impute to the natur' of British Institutions and their tendency to suppress that popular inquiry and information which air so widely diffused even in the trackless forests of this vast Continent of the Western Ocean; that the knowledge of Britishers themselves on such points is not to be compared with that possessed by our intelligent and locomotive citizens. This is interesting, and confirms my observation. When you say, sir," he continued, addressing Martin, "that your Queen does not reside in the Tower of London, you fall into an error, not uncommon to your countrymen, even when their abilities and moral elements air such as to command respect. But, sir, you air wrong. She *does* live there—"

"When she is at the Court of St. James's;" interposed Kettle.

"When she is at the Court of St. James's, of course," returned the General, in the same benignant way: "for if her location was in Windsor Pavilion it couldn't be in London at the same time. Your Tower of London, sir," pursued the General, smiling with a mild consciousness of his knowledge, "is nat'rally your royal residence. Being located in the immediate neighbourhood of your Parks, your Drives,

your Triumphant Arches, your Opera, and your Royal Almacks, it nat'rally suggests itself as the place for holding a luxurious and thoughtless court. And, consequently," said the General, "consequently, the court is held there."

"Have you been in England?" asked Martin.

"In print I have, sir," said the General, "not otherwise. We air a reading people here, sir. You will meet with much information among us that will surprise you, sir."

"I have not the least doubt of it," returned Martin. But here he was interrupted by Mr. La Fayette Kettle, who whispered in his ear:

"You know General Choke?"

"No," returned Martin, in the same tone.

"You know what he is considered?"

"One of the most remarkable men in the country?" said Martin, at a venture.

"That's a fact," rejoined Kettle. "I was sure you must have heard of him!"

"I think," said Martin, addressing himself to the General again, "that I have the pleasure of being the bearer of a letter of introduction to you, sir. From Mr. Bevan, of Massachusetts," he added, giving it to him.

The General took it and read it attentively: now and then stopping to glance at the two strangers. When he had finished the note, he came over to Martin, sat down by him, and shook hands.

"Well!" he said, "and you think of settling in Eden?"

"Subject to your opinion, and the agent's advice," replied Martin. "I am told there is nothing to be done in the old towns."

"I can introduce you to the agent, sir," said the General. "I know him. In fact, I am a member of the Eden Land Corporation myself."

This was serious news to Martin, for his friend had laid great stress upon the General's having no connection, as he thought, with any land company, and therefore being likely to give him disinterested advice. The General explained that he had joined the Corporation only a few weeks ago, and that no communication had passed between himself and Mr. Bevan since.

"We have very little to venture," said Martin anxiously—"only a few pounds—but it is our all. Now, do you think that for one of my profession, this would be a speculation with any hope or chance in it?"

"Well!" observed the General gravely, "if there wasn't any hope or chance in the speculation, it wouldn't have engaged my dollars, I opinionate."

"I don't mean for the sellers," said Martin. "For the buyers—for the buyers!"

"For the buyers, sir?" observed the General, in a most impressive manner. "Well! you come from an old country: from a country, sir, that has piled up golden calves as high as Babel, and worshipped 'em for ages. We are a new country, sir; man is in a more primeval state here, sir; we have not the excuse of having lapsed in the slow course of time into degenerate practices; we have no false gods; man, sir, here, is man in all his dignity. We fought for that or nothing. Here am I, sir," said the General, setting up his umbrella to represent himself; and a villanous-looking umbrella it was; a very bad counter to stand for the sterling coin of his benevolence: "here am I with grey hairs, sir, and a moral sense. Would I, with my principles, invest capital in this speculation if I didn't think it full of hopes and chances for my brother man?"

Martin tried to look convinced, but he thought of New York, and found it difficult.

"What are the Great United States for, sir," pursued the General, "if not for the regeneration of man? But it is nat'ral in you to make such an enquiry, for you come from England, and you do not know my country."

"Then you think," said Martin, "that allowing for the hardships we are prepared to undergo, there is a reasonable—Heaven knows we don't expect much—a reasonable opening in this place?"

"A reasonable opening in Eden, sir! But see the agent, see the agent; see the maps, and plans, sir; and conclude to go or stay, according to the natur' of the settlement. Eden hadn't need to go a begging yet, sir," remarked the General.

"It is an awful lovely place, sure-ly. And frightful wholesome likewise!" said Mr. Kettle, who had made himself a party to this conversation as a matter of course.

Martin felt that to dispute such testimony, for no better reason than because he had his secret misgivings on the subject, would be ungentlemanly and indecent. So he thanked the General for his promise to put him in personal communication with the agent; and "concluded" to see that officer next morning. He then begged the General to inform him who the Watertoast Sympathisers were, of whom he had spoken in addressing Mr. La Fayette Kettle, and on what grievances they bestowed their Sympathy. To which the General, looking very serious, made answer, that he might fully enlighten himself on those points to-morrow by attending a Great

Meeting of the Body, which would then be held at the town to which they were travelling: "over which, sir," said the General, "my fellow-citizens have called on me to preside."

They came to their journey's end late in the evening. Close to the railway was an immense white edifice, like an ugly hospital, on which was painted "NATIONAL HOTEL." There was a wooden gallery or verandah in front, in which it was rather startling, when the train stopped, to behold a great many pairs of boots and shoes, and the smoke of a great many cigars, but no other evidences of human habitation. By slow degrees, however, some heads and shoulders appeared, and connecting themselves with the boots and shoes, led to the discovery that certain gentlemen boarders, who had a fancy for putting their heels where the gentlemen boarders in other countries usually put their heads, were enjoying themselves after their own manner in the cool of the evening.

There was a great bar-room in this hotel, and a great public room in which the general table was being set out for supper. There were interminable whitewashed staircases, long whitewashed galleries up-stairs and down-stairs, scores of little whitewashed bedrooms, and a four-sided verandah to every story in the house, which formed a large brick square with an uncomfortable court-yard in the centre: where some clothes were drying. Here and there, some yawning gentlemen lounged up and down with their hands in their pockets: but within the house and without, wherever half a dozen people were collected together, there, in their looks, dress, morals, manners, habits, intellect, and conversation, were Mr. Jefferson Brick, Colonel Diver, Major Pawkins, General Choke, and Mr. La Fayette Kettle, over, and over, and over again. They did the same things; said the same things; judged all subjects by, and reduced all subjects to, the same standard. Observing how they lived, and how they were always in the enchanting company of each other, Martin even began to comprehend their being the social, cheerful, winning, airy men they were.

At the sounding of a dismal gong, this pleasant company went trooping down from all parts of the house to the public room; while from the neighbouring stores other guests came flocking in, in shoals; for half the town, married folks as well as single, resided at the National Hotel. Tea, coffee, dried meats, tongue, ham, pickles, cake, toast, preserves, and bread and butter, were swallowed with the usual ravaging speed; and then as before the company

dropped off by degrees, and lounged away to the desk, the counter, or the bar-room. The ladies had a smaller ordinary of their own, to which their husbands and brothers were admitted if they chose; and in all other respects they enjoyed themselves as at Pawkins's.

"Now Mark, my good fellow," said Martin, closing the door of his little chamber, "we must hold a solemn council, for our fate is decided to-morrow morning. You are determined to invest these savings of yours in the common stock, are you?"

"If I hadn't been determined to make that venture, sir," answered Mr. Tapley, "I shouldn't have come."

"How much is there here, did you say?" asked Martin, holding up a little bag.

"Thirty-seven pound ten and sixpence. The Savings' Bank said so, at least. I never counted it. But *they* know, bless you," said Mark, with a shake of the head expressive of his unbounded confidence in the wisdom and arithmetic of those Institutions.

"The money we brought with us," said Martin, "is reduced to a few shillings less than eight pounds."

Mr. Tapley smiled, and looked all manner of ways, that he might not be supposed to attach any importance to this fact.

"Upon the ring—*her* ring, Mark," said Martin, looking ruefully at his empty finger—

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Tapley. "Beg your pardon, sir."

"We raised, in English money, fourteen pounds. So, even with that, your share of the stock is still very much the larger of the two, you see. Now Mark," said Martin, in his old way, just as he might have spoken to Tom Pinch, "I have thought of a means of making this up to you,—more than making it up to you, I hope,—and very materially elevating your prospects in life."

"Oh! don't talk of that, you know, sir," returned Mark. "I don't want no elevating, sir. I'm all right enough, sir, I am."

"No, but hear me," said Martin, "because this is very important to you, and a great satisfaction to me. Mark, you shall be a partner in the business; an equal partner with myself. I will put in, as my additional capital, my professional knowledge and ability; and half the annual profits, as long as it is carried on, shall be yours."

Poor Martin! for ever building castles in the air. For ever, in his very selfishness, forgetful of all but his own teeming hopes and sanguine plans. Swelling, at that instant, with the con-

sciousness of patronising and most munificently rewarding Mark!

"I don't know, sir," Mark rejoined, much more sadly than his custom was, though from a very different cause than Martin supposed, "what I can say to this, in the way of thanking you. I'll stand by you, sir, to the best of my ability, and to the last. That's all."

"We quite understand each other, my good fellow," said Martin, rising in self-approval and condescension. "We are no longer master and servant, but friends and partners; and are mutually gratified. If we determine on Eden, the business shall be commenced as soon as we get there. Under the name," said Martin, who never hammered upon an idea that wasn't red hot, "under the name of Chuzzlewit and Tapley."

"Lord love you, sir," cried Mark, "don't have my name in it. I ain't acquainted with the business, sir. I must be Co., I must. I've often thought," he added in a low voice, "as I should like to know a Co.; but I little thought as ever I should live to be one."

"You shall have your own way, Mark."

"Thank'ee, sir. If any country gentleman thereabouts, in the public way, or otherwise, wanted such a thing as a skittle-ground made, I could take that part of the business, sir."

"Against any architect in the States," said Martin. "Get a couple of sherry-cobblers, Mark, and we'll drink success to the firm."

Either he forgot already (and often afterwards), that they were no longer master and servant, or considered this kind of duty to be among the legitimate functions of the Co. But Mark obeyed with his usual alacrity; and before they parted for the night, it was agreed between them that they should go together to the agent's in the morning, but that Martin should decide the Eden question, on his own sound judgment. And Mark made no merit, even to himself in his jollity, of this concession; perfectly well knowing that the matter would come to that in the end, any way.

The General was one of the party at the public table next day, and after breakfast suggested that they should wait upon the agent without loss of time. They, desiring nothing more, agreed; so off they all four started for the office of the Eden settlement, which was almost within rifle-shot of the National Hotel.

It was a small place—something like a turnpike. But a great deal of land may be got into a dice-box, and why may not a whole territory be bargained for, in a shed? It was but a temporary office too; for the Edeners were "going" to build a superb establishment for the transac-

tion of their business, and had already got so far as to mark out the site: which is a great way in America. The office-door was wide open, and in the doorway was the agent; no doubt a tremendous fellow to get through his work, for he seemed to have no arrears, but was swinging backwards and forwards in a rocking-chair, with one of his legs planted high up against the door-post, and the other doubled up under him, as if he were hatching his foot.

He was a gaunt man in a huge straw hat, and a coat of green stuff. The weather being hot, he had no cravat, and wore his shirt collar wide open; so that every time he spoke something was seen to twitch and jerk up in his throat, like the little hammers in a harpsichord when the notes are struck. Perhaps it was the Truth feebly endeavouring to leap to his lips. If so, it never reached them.

Two grey eyes lurked deep within this agent's head, but one of them had no sight in it, and stood stock still. With that side of his face he seemed to listen to what the other side was doing. Thus each profile had a distinct expression; and when the movable side was most in action, the rigid one was in its coldest state of watchfulness. It was like turning the man inside out, to pass to that view of his features in his liveliest mood, and see how calculating and intent they were.

Each long black hair upon his head hung down as straight as any plummet line, but rumpled tufts were on the arches of his eyes, as if the crow whose foot was deeply printed in the corners, had pecked and torn them in a savage recognition of his kindred nature as a bird of prey.

Such was the man whom they now approached, and whom the General saluted by the name of Scadder.

"Wel' Gen'ral," he returned, "and how are you?"

"Ac-tive and spry, sir, in my country's service and the sympathetic cause. Two gentlemen on business, Mr. Scadder."

He shook hands with each of them—nothing is done in America without shaking hands—then went on rocking.

"I think I know what bis'ness you have brought these strangers here upon, then, Gen'ral?"

"Well, sir. I expect you may."

"You air a tongue-y person, Gen'ral. For you talk too much, and that's a fact," said Scadder. "You speak a-larming well in public, but you didn't ought to go ahead so fast in private. Now!"

"If I can realise your meaning, ride me on a rail!" returned the General, after pausing for consideration.

"You know we didn't wish to sell the lots off right away to any loafer as might bid," said Scadder; "but had concluded to reserve 'em for Aristocrats of Natur'. Yes!"

"And they are here, sir!" cried the General with warmth. "They are here, sir!"

"If they air here," returned the agent, in reproachful accents, "that's enough. But you didn't ought to have your dander ris with *me*, Gen'ral."

The General whispered Martin that Scadder was the honestest fellow in the world, and that he wouldn't have given him offence designedly, for ten thousand dollars.

"I do my duty; and I raise the dander of my feller critters, as I wish to serve," said Scadder in a low voice, looking down the road and rocking still. "They rile up rough, along of my objecting to their selling Eden off too cheap. That's human natur'! Well!"

"Mr. Scadder," said the General, assuming his oratorical department. "Sir! Here is my hand, and here my heart. I esteem you, sir, and ask your pardon. These gentlemen air friends of mine, or I would not have brought 'em here, sir, being well aware, sir, that the lots at present go entirely too cheap. But these air friends, sir; these air partick'ler friends."

Mr. Scadder was so satisfied by this explanation, that he shook the General warmly by the hand, and got out of the rocking-chair to do it. He then invited the General's particular friends to accompany him into the office. As to the General, he observed, with his usual benevolence, that being one of the company, he wouldn't interfere in the transaction on any account; so he appropriated the rocking-chair to himself, and looked at the prospect, like a good Samaritan waiting for a traveller.

"Heyday!" cried Martin, as his eye rested on a great plan which occupied one whole side of the office. Indeed, the office had little else in it, but some geological and botanical specimens, one or two rusty ledgers, a homely desk, and a stool. "Heyday! what's that?"

"That's Eden," said Scadder, picking his teeth with a sort of young bayonet that flew out of his knife when he touched a spring.

"Why, I had no idea it was a city."

"Hadn't you? Oh, it's a city."

A flourishing city, too! An architectural city! There were banks, churches, cathedrals, market-places, factories, hotels, stores, mansions, wharves; an exchange, a theatre; public build-

ings of all kinds, down to the office of the Eden Stinger, a daily journal; all faithfully depicted in the view before them.

"Dear me! It's really a most important place!" cried Martin, turning round.

"Oh! it's very important," observed the agent.

"But, I am afraid," said Martin, glancing again at the Public Buildings, "that there's nothing left for me to do."

"Well! it ain't all built," replied the agent. "Not quite."

This was a great relief.

"The market-place, now," said Martin. "Is that built?"

"That?" said the agent, sticking his toothpick into the weathercock on the top. "Let me see. No: that ain't built."

"Rather a good job to begin with—eh, Mark?" whispered Martin, nudging him with his elbow.

Mark, who, with a very stolid countenance had been eyeing the plan and the agent by turns, merely rejoined "Uncommon!"

A dead silence ensued, Mr. Scadder in some short recesses or vacations of his toothpick, whistled a few bars of Yankee Doodle, and blew the dust off the roof of the Theatre.

"I suppose," said Martin, feigning to look more narrowly at the plan, but showing by his tremulous voice how much depended, in his mind, upon the answer; "I suppose there are—several architects there?"

"There ain't a single one," said Scadder.

"Mark," whispered Martin, pulling him by the sleeve, "do you hear that? But whose work is all this before us, then?" he asked aloud.

"The soil being very fruitful, public buildings grows spontaneous, perhaps," said Mark.

He was on the agent's dark side as he said it; but Scadder instantly changed his place, and brought his active eye to bear upon him.

"Feel of my hands, young man," he said.

"What for?" asked Mark: declining.

"Air they dirty, or air they clean, sir?" said Scadder, holding them out.

In a physical point of view they were decidedly dirty. But it being obvious that Mr. Scadder offered them for examination in a figurative sense, as emblems of his moral character, Martin hastened to pronounce them pure as the driven snow.

"I entreat, Mark," he said, with some irritation, "that you will not obtrude remarks of that nature, which, however harmless and well-intentioned, are quite out of place, and cannot be

expected to be very agreeable to strangers. I am quite surprised."

"The Co.'s a putting his foot in it already," thought Mark. "He must be a sleeping partner—fast asleep and snoring—Co. must: / see."

Mr. Scadder said nothing, but he set his back against the plan, and thrust his toothpick into the desk some twenty times: looking at Mark all the while as if he were stabbing him in effigy.

"You haven't said whose work it is," Martin ventured to observe, at length, in a tone of mild propitiation.

"Well, never mind whose work it is, or isn't," said the agent sulkily. "No matter how it did eventuate. P'raps he cleared off, handsome, with a heap of dollars; p'raps he wasn't worth a cent. P'raps he was a loafin' rowdy; p'raps a ring-tailed roarer. Now!"

"All your doing, Mark!" said Martin.

"P'raps," pursued the agent, "them an't plants of Eden's raising. No! P'raps that desk and stool ain't made from Eden lumber. No! P'raps no end of squatters ain't gone out there. No! P'raps there ain't no such location in the territory of the Great U-nited States. Oh, no!"

"I hope you're satisfied with the success of your joke, Mark," said Martin.

But here, at a most opportune and happy time, the General interposed, and called out to Scadder from the doorway to give his friends the particulars of that little lot of fifty acres with the house upon it; which, having belonged to the company formerly, had lately lapsed again into their hands.

"You air a deal too open-handed, Gen'ral," was the answer. "It is a lot as should be rose in price. It is."

He grumblyngly opened his books notwithstanding, and always keeping his bright side towards Mark, no matter at what amount of inconvenience to himself, displayed a certain leaf for their perusal. Martin read it greedily, and then inquired:

"Now where upon the plan may this place be?"

"Upon the plan?" said Scadder.

"Yes."

He turned towards it, and reflected for a short time, as if, having been put upon his mettle, he was resolved to be particular to the very minutest hair's breadth of a shade. At length, after wheeling his toothpick slowly round and round in the air, as if it were a carrier pigeon just thrown up, he suddenly made a dart at the drawing, and pierced the very centre of the main wharf, through and through.

"There!" he said, leaving his knife quivering in the wall; "that's where it is!"

Martin glanced with sparkling eyes upon his Co., and his Co. saw that the thing was done.

The bargain was not concluded as easily as might have been expected though, for Scadder was caustic and ill-humoured, and cast much unnecessary opposition in the way: at one time requesting them to think of it, and call again in a week or a fortnight; at another, predicting that they wouldn't like it; at another, offering to retract and let them off, and muttering strong imprecations upon the folly of the General. But the whole of the astoundingly small sum total of purchase-money—it was only one hundred and fifty dollars, or something more than thirty pounds of the capital brought by Co. into the architectural concern—was ultimately paid down; and Martin's head was two inches nearer the roof of the little wooden office, with the consciousness of being a landed proprietor in the thriving city of Eden.

"If it shouldn't happen to fit," said Scadder, as he gave Martin the necessary credentials on receipt of his money, "don't blame me."

"No, no," he replied merrily. "We'll not blame you. General, are you going?"

"I am at your service, sir; and I wish you," said the General, giving him his hand with grave cordiality, "joy of your po-session. You air now, sir, a denizen of the most powerful and highly-civilised do-minion that has ever graced the world; a do-minion, sir, where man is bound to man in one vast bond of equal love and truth. May you, sir, be worthy of your a-adopted country!"

Martin thanked him, and took leave of Mr. Scadder; who had resumed his post in the rocking-chair, immediately on the General's rising from it, and was once more swinging away as if he had never been disturbed. Mark looked back several times as they went down the road towards the National Hotel, but now his blighted profile was towards them, and nothing but attentive thoughtfulness was written on it. Strangely different to the other side! He was not a man much given to laughing, and never laughed outright; but every line in the print of the crow's foot, and every little wiry vein in that division of his head, was wrinkled up into a grin! The compound figure of Death and the Lady at the top of the old ballad was not divided with a greater nicety, and hadn't halves more monstrously unlike each other, than the two profiles of Zephaniah Scadder.

The General posted along at a great rate, for the clock was on the stroke of twelve; and at

that hour precisely, the Great Meeting of the Watertoast Sympathisers was to be holden in the public room of the National Hotel. Being very curious to witness the demonstration, and know what it was all about, Martin kept close to the General: and, keeping closer than ever when they entered the Hall, got by that means upon a little platform of tables at the upper end: where an arm-chair was set for the General, and Mr. La Fayette Kettle, as secretary, was making a great display of some foolscap documents—Screamers, no doubt.

"Well, sir!" he said, as he shook hands with Martin, "here is a spectacle calc'lated to make the British Lion put his tail between his legs, and howl with anguish, I expect!"

Martin certainly thought it possible that the British Lion might have been rather out of his element in that Ark: but he kept the idea to himself. The General was then voted to the chair, on the motion of a pallid lad of the Jefferson Brick school: who forthwith set in for a high-spiced speech, with a good deal about hearths and homes in it, and unriveting the chains of Tyranny.

Oh but it was a clincher for the British Lion, it was! The indignation of the glowing young Columbian knew no bounds. If he could only have been one of his own forefathers, he said, wouldn't he have peppered that same Lion, and been to him as another Brute Tamer with a wire whip, teaching him lessons not easily forgotten. "Lion! (cried that young Columbian) where is he? Who is he? What is he? Show him to me. Let me have him here. Here!" said the young Columbian, in a wrestling attitude, "upon this sacred altar. Here!" cried the young Columbian, idealising the dining-table, "upon ancestral ashes, cemented with the glorious blood poured out like water on our native plains of Chickabiddy Lick! Bring forth that Lion!" said the young Columbian. "Alone, I dare him! I taunt that Lion. I tell that Lion, that Freedom's hand once twisted in his mane, he rolls a corse before me, and the Eagles of the Great Republic laugh ha, ha!"

When it was found that the Lion didn't come, but kept out of the way; that the young Columbian stood there, with folded arms, alone in his glory; and consequently that the Eagles were no doubt laughing wildly on the mountain tops,—such cheers arose as might have shaken the hands upon the Horse-Guards' clock, and changed the very mean time of the day in England's capital.

"Who is this?" Martin telegraphed to La Fayette.

The Secretary wrote something, very gravely, on a piece of paper, twisted it up, and had it passed to him from hand to hand. It was an improvement on the old sentiment: "Perhaps as remarkable a man as any in our country."

This young Columbian was succeeded by another, to the full as eloquent as he, who drew down storms of cheers. But both remarkable youths, in their great excitement (for your true poetry can never stoop to details), forgot to say with whom or what the Watertoasters sympathised, and likewise why or wherefore they were sympathetic. Thus, Martin remained for a long time as completely in the dark as ever; until at length a ray of light broke in upon him through the medium of the Secretary, who, by reading the minutes of their past proceedings, made the matter somewhat clearer. He then learned that the Watertoast Association sympathised with a certain Public Man in Ireland, who held a contest upon certain points with England; and that they did so, because they didn't love England at all—not by any means because they loved Ireland much; being indeed horribly jealous and distrustful of its people always, and only tolerating them because of their working hard, which made them very useful; labour being held in greater indignity in the simple republic than in any other country upon earth. This rendered Martin curious to see what grounds of sympathy the Watertoast Association put forth; nor was he long in suspense, for the General rose to read a letter to the Public Man, which with his own hands he had written.

"Thus," said the General, "thus, my friends and fellow-citizens, it runs:

"SIR,

"I address you on behalf of the Watertoast Association of United Sympathisers. It is founded, sir, in the great republic of America! and now holds its breath, and swells the blue veins in its forehead nigh to bursting, as it watches, sir, with feverish intensity and sympathetic ardour, your noble efforts in the cause of Freedom."

At the name of Freedom, and at every repetition of that name, all the Sympathisers roared aloud; cheering with nine times nine, and nine times over.

"In Freedom's name, sir—holy Freedom—I address you. In Freedom's name, I send herewith a contribution to the funds of your Society. In Freedom's name, sir, I advert with indignation and disgust to that accursed animal, with gore-stained whiskers, whose rampant cruelty and fiery lust have ever been a scourge,

a torment to the world. The naked visitors to Crusoe's Island, sir; the flying wives of Peter Wilkins; the fruit-smear'd children of the tangled bush; nay, even the men of large stature, anciently bred in the mining districts of Cornwall; alike bear witness to its savage nature. Where, sir, are the Cormorans, the Blunderbores, the Great Feefooms, named in History? all, all, exterminated by its destroying hand.

"I allude, sir, to the British Lion.

"Devoted, mind and body, heart and soul, to Freedom, sir—to Freedom, blessed solace to the snail upon the cellar-door, the oyster in his pearly bed, the still mite in his home of cheese, the very wrinkle of your country in his shelly lair—in her unsullied name, we offer you our sympathy. Oh, sir, in this our cherished and our happy land, her fires burn bright and clear and smokeless: once lighted up in yours, the lion shall be roasted whole.

"I am, sir, in Freedom's name,

"Your affectionate friend and faithful Sympathiser,

"CYRUS CHOKE,

"General, U.S.M."

It happened that just as the General began to read this letter, the railroad train arrived, bringing a new mail from England; and a packet had been handed in to the Secretary, which during its perusal and the frequent cheerings in homage to freedom, he had opened. Now, its contents disturbed him very much, and the moment the General sat down, he hurried to his side, and placed in his hand a letter and several printed extracts from English newspapers; to which, in a state of infinite excitement, he called his immediate attention.

The General, being greatly heated by his own composition, was in a fit state to receive any inflammable influence; but he had no sooner possessed himself of the contents of these documents, than a change came over his face, involving such a huge amount of cholera and passion, that the noisy concourse were silent in a moment, in very wonder at the sight of him.

"My friends!" cried the General, rising; "my friends and fellow-citizens, we have been mistaken in this man."

"In what man?" was the cry.

"In this," panted the General, holding up the letter he had read aloud a few minutes before. "I find that he has been, and is, the advocate—consistent in it always too—of Nigger emancipation!"

If anything beneath the sky be real, those Sons of Freedom would have pistolled, stabbed—in some way slain—that man by coward hands and murderous violence, if he had stood among them at that time. The most confiding of their own countrymen would not have wagered then; no, nor would they ever peril; one dung-hill straw, upon the life of any man in such a strait. They tore the letter, cast the fragments in the air, trod down the pieces as they fell; and yelled, and groaned, and hissed, till they could cry no longer.

"I shall move," said the General, when he could make himself heard, "that the Watertoast Association of United Sympathisers be immediately dissolved!"

Down with it! Away with it! Don't hear of it! Burn its records! Pull the room down! Blot it out of human memory!

"But, my fellow-countrymen!" said the General, "the contributions. We have funds. What is to be done with the funds?"

It was hastily resolved that a piece of plate should be presented to a certain constitutional



"WELL, SIR!" SAID THE CAPTAIN, PUTTING HIS HAT A LITTLE MORE ON ONE SIDE, FOR IT WAS RATHER TIGHT IN THE CROWN: "YOU'RE QUITE A PUBLIC MAN I CALCULATE."

Judge, who had laid down from the bench the noble principle, that it was lawful for any white mob to murder any black man; and that another piece of plate, of similar value, should be presented to a certain Patriot, who had declared from his high place in the Legislature, that he and his friends would hang, without trial, any Abolitionist who might pay them a visit. For the surplus, it was agreed that it should be devoted to aiding the enforcement of those free and equal laws, which render it incalculably more criminal and dangerous to teach a negro to read and write, than to roast him alive in a

public city. These points adjusted, the meeting broke up in great disorder: and there was an end of the Watertoast Sympathy.

As Martin ascended to his bedroom, his eye was attracted by the Republican banner, which had been hoisted from the house-top in honour of the occasion, and was fluttering before a window which he passed.

"Tut!" said Martin. "You're a gay flag in the distance. But let a man be near enough to get the light upon the other side, and see through you; and you are but sorry fustian!"

CHAPTER XXII.

FROM WHICH IT WILL BE SEEN THAT MARTIN BECAME A LION ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT. TOGETHER WITH THE REASON WHY.



AS soon as it was generally known in the National Hotel, that the young Englishman, Mr. Chuzzlewit, had purchased "a location" in the Valley of Eden, and intended to betake himself to that earthly Paradise by the next steamboat; he became a popular character. Why this should be, or how it had come to pass, Martin no more knew than Mrs. Gamp of Kingsgate-street, High Holborn, did; but that he was for the time being, the lion, by popular election, of the Watertoast community, and that his society was in rather inconvenient request, there could be no kind of doubt.

The first notification he received of this change in his position was the following epistle, written in a thin running hand,—with here and there a fat letter or two, to make the general effect more striking,—on a sheet of paper, ruled with blue lines.

*"National Hotel,
Monday Morning.*

"Dear Sir,

"When I had the privillidge of being your fellow-traveller in the cars, the day before yesterday, you offered some remarks upon the subject of the Tower of London, which (in common with my fellow-citizens generally) I could wish to hear repeated to a public audience.

"As secretary to the Young Men's Watertoast Association of this town, I am requested to inform you that the Society will be proud to hear you deliver a lecture upon the Tower of London, at their Hall to-morrow evening, at seven o'clock; and as a large issue of quarter-dollar tickets may be expected, your answer and consent by bearer will be considered obliging.

"Dear Sir,

"Yours truly,
LA FAYETTE KETTLE.

"The Honourable M. Chuzzlewit.

"P.S.—The Society would not be particular in limiting you to the Tower of London. Permit me to suggest that any remarks upon the Elements of Geology, or (if more convenient) upon the Writings of your talented and witty countryman, the honourable Mr. Miller, would be well received."

Very much aghast at this invitation, Martin wrote back, civilly declining it; and had scarcely done so, when he received another letter.

*"No. 47, Bunker Hill Street,
Monday Morning.*

"(Private.)

"Sir,

"I was raised in those interminable solitudes where our mighty Mississippi (or Father of Waters) rolls his turbid flood.

"I am young, and ardent. For there is a poetry in wildness, and every alligator basking in the slime is in himself an Epic, self-contained. I aspire for fame. It is my yearning and my thirst.

"Are you, sir, aware of any member of Congress in England, who would undertake to pay my expenses to that country, and for six months after my arrival?

"There is something within me which gives me the assurance that this enlightened patronage would not be thrown away. In literature or art; the bar, the pulpit, or the stage; in one or other, if not all, I feel that I am certain to succeed.

"If too much engaged to write to any such yourself, please let me have a list of three or four of those most likely to respond, and I will address them through the Post Office. May I also ask you to favour me with any critical observations that have ever presented themselves to your reflective faculties, on 'Cain, a Mystery,' by the Right Honourable Lord Byron?

"I am, Sir,

"Yours (forgive me if I add, soaringly),

PUTNAM SMIF.

"P.S.—Address your answer to America Junior, Messrs. Hancock & Floby, Dry Goods Store, as above."

Both of which letters, together with Martin's reply to each, were, according to a laudable custom, much tending to the promotion of gentlemanly feeling and social confidence, published in the next number of the Watertoast Gazette.

He had scarcely got through this correspondence, when Captain Kedgick, the landlord, kindly came up-stairs to see how he was getting on. The captain sat down upon the bed before he spoke; and finding it rather hard, moved to the pillow.

"Well, sir!" said the Captain, putting his hat a little more on one side, for it was rather tight in the crown: "You're quite a public man, I calculate."

"So it seems," retorted Martin, who was very tired.

"Our citizens, sir," pursued the Captain, "intend to pay their respects to you. You will have to hold a sort of l^e-v^ee, sir, while you're here."

"Powers above!" cried Martin, "I couldn't do that, my good fellow!"

"I reckon you *must* then," said the Captain.

"Must is not a pleasant word, Captain," urged Martin.

"Well! I didn't fix the mother language, and I can't unfix it," said the Captain coolly: "else I'd make it pleasant. You must receive. That's all."

"But why should I receive people who care as much for me as I care for them?" asked Martin.

"Well! because I have had a muniment put up in the bar," returned the Captain.

"A what?" cried Martin.

"A muniment," rejoined the Captain.

Martin looked despairingly at Mark, who informed him that the Captain meant a written notice that Mr. Chuzzlewit would receive the Watertoasters that day, at and after two o'clock: which was, in effect, then hanging in the bar, as Mark from ocular inspection of the same could testify.

"You wouldn't be unpop'lar, I know," said the Captain, paring his nails. "Our citizens an't long of riling up, I tell you; and our Gazette could flay you like a wild cat."

Martin was going to be very wroth, but he thought better of it, and said:

"In Heaven's name let them come, then."

"Oh, *they'll* come," returned the Captain.

"I have seen the big room fixed a 'purpose, with my eyes."

"But will you," said Martin, seeing that the Captain was about to go; "will you at least tell me this? What do they want to see me for? what have I done? and how do they happen to have such a sudden interest in me?"

Captain Kedgick put a thumb and three fingers to each side of the brim of his hat; lifted it a little way off his head; put it on again carefully; passed one hand all down his face, beginning at the forehead and ending at the chin; looked at Martin; then at Mark; then at Martin again; winked; and walked out.

"Upon my life, now!" said Martin, bringing his hand heavily upon the table; "such a perfectly unaccountable fellow as that, I never saw. Mark, what do you say to this?"

"Why, sir," returned his partner, "my opinion is that we must have got to the most remarkable man in the country at last. So I hope there's an end to the breed, sir."

Although this made Martin laugh, it couldn't keep off two o'clock. Punctually, as the hour struck, Captain Kedgick returned to hand him to the room of state; and he had no sooner got him safe there, than he bawled down the staircase to his fellow-citizens below, that Mr. Chuzzlewit was "receiving."

Up they came with a rush. Up they came until the room was full, and, through the open door, a dismal perspective of more to come, was shown upon the stairs. One after another, one after another, dozen after dozen, score after score, more, more, more, up they came: all shaking hands with Martin. Such varieties of hands, the thick, the thin, the short, the long, the fat, the lean, the coarse, the fine; such differences of temperature, the hot, the cold, the dry, the moist, the flabby; such diversities of grasp, the tight, the loose, the short-lived, and the lingering! Still up, up, up, more, more, more: and ever and anon the Captain's voice was heard above the crowd—"There's more below; there's more below. Now, gentlemen, you that have been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, will you clear, gentlemen? Will you clear? Will you be so good as clear, gentlemen, and make a little room for more?"

Regardless of the Captain's cries, they didn't clear at all, but stood there, bolt upright and staring. Two gentlemen connected with the Watertoast Gazette had come express to get the matter for an article on Martin. They had agreed to divide the labour. One of them took him below the waistcoat; one above. Each stood directly in front of his subject with his head a little on one side, intent on his department. If Martin put one boot before the other, the lower gentleman was down upon him; he rubbed a pimple on his nose, and the upper gentleman booked it. He opened his mouth to speak, and the same gentleman was on one knee before him, looking in at his teeth, with the nice scrutiny of a dentist. Amateurs in the physiognomical and phrenological sciences roved about him with watchful eyes and itching fingers, and sometimes one, more daring than the rest, made a mad grasp at the back of his head, and vanished in the crowd. They had him in all points of view: in front, in profile, three-quarter face, and behind. Those who were not professional or scientific, audibly exchanged opinions on his looks. New lights shone in upon him, in respect of his nose. Contradictory rumours were abroad on the subject of his hair. And still the Captain's voice was heard—so stifled by the concourse, that he seemed to speak from underneath a feather-bed—exclaiming—"Gen-

tleman, you that have been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, *will* you clear?"

Even when they began to clear, it was no better; for then a stream of gentlemen, every one with a lady on each arm (exactly like the chorus to the National Anthem when Royalty goes in state to the play), came gliding in—every new group fresher than the last, and bent on staying to the latest moment. If they spoke to him, which was not often, they invariably asked the same questions, in the same tone; with no more remorse, or delicacy, or consideration, than if he had been a figure of stone, purchased and paid for, and set up there, for their delight. Even when, in the slow course of time, these died off, it was as bad as ever, if not worse; for then the boys grew bold, and came in as a class of themselves, and did everything that the grown-up people had done. Uncouth stragglers too appeared; men of a ghostly kind, who being in, didn't know how to get out again: insomuch that one silent gentleman with glazed and fishy eyes, and only one button on his waistcoat (which was a very large metal one, and shone prodigiously), got behind the door, and stood there, like a Clock, long after everybody else was gone.

Martin felt, from pure fatigue, and heat, and worry, as if he could have fallen on the ground and willingly remained there, if they would but have had the mercy to leave him alone. But as letters and messages threatening his public denouncement if he didn't see the senders, poured in like hail; and as more visitors came while he took his coffee by himself; and as Mark, with all his vigilance, was unable to keep them from the door; he resolved to go to bed—not that he felt at all sure of bed being any protection, but that he might not leave a forlorn hope untried.

He had communicated this design to Mark, and was on the eve of escaping, when the door was thrown open in a great hurry, and an elderly gentleman entered: bringing with him a lady who certainly could not be considered young—that was matter of fact; and probably could not be considered handsome—but that was a matter of opinion. She was very straight, very tall, and not at all flexible in face or figure. On her head she wore a great straw bonnet, with trimmings of the same, in which she looked as if she had been thatched by an unskilful labourer; and in her hand she held a most enormous fan.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit, I believe?" said the gentleman.

"That is my name."

"Sir," said the gentleman, "I am pressed for time."

"Thank God!" thought Martin.

"I go back Toe my home, sir," pursued the gentleman, "by the return train, which starts immediate. Start is not a word you use in your country, sir."

"Oh yes, it is," said Martin.

"You air mistaken, sir," returned the gentleman, with great decision: "but we will not pursue the subject, lest it should awake your præjū—dice. Sir, Mrs. Hominy."

Martin bowed.

"Mrs. Hominy, sir, is the lady of Major Hominy, one of our chicest spirits; and belongs Toe one of our most aristocratic families. You air, p'raps, acquainted, sir, with Mrs. Hominy's writings?"

Martin couldn't say he was.

"You have much Toe learn, and Toe enjoy, sir," said the gentleman. "Mrs. Hominy is going Toe stay until the end of the Fall, sir, with her married daughter at the settlement of New Thermopylæ, three days this side of Eden. Any attention, sir, that you can show Toe Mrs. Hominy upon the journey, will be very grateful Toe the Major and our fellow-citizens. Mrs. Hominy, I wish you good night, ma'am, and a pleasant pro-gress on your rout!"

Martin could scarcely believe it; but he had gone, and Mrs. Hominy was drinking the milk.

"A'most used-up I am, I do declare!" she observed. "The jolting in the cars is pretty nigh as bad as if the rail was full of snags and sawyers."

"Snags and sawyers, ma'am?" said Martin.

"Well, then, I do suppose you'll hardly realise my meaning, sir," said Mrs. Hominy. "My! Only think! *Do* tell!"

It did not appear that these expressions, although they seemed to conclude with an urgent entreaty, stood in need of any answer; for Mrs. Hominy, untying her bonnet-strings, observed that she would withdraw to lay that article of dress aside, and would return immediately.

"Mark!" said Martin. "Touch me, will you? Am I awake?"

"Hominy is, sir," returned his partner—"Broad awake! Just the sort of woman, sir, as would be discovered with her eyes wide open, and her mind a-working for her country's good, at any hour of the day or night."

They had no opportunity of saying more, for Mrs. Hominy stalked in again—very erect, in proof of her aristocratic blood; and holding in her clasped hands a red cotton pocket-handkerchief, perhaps a parting gift from that choice

spirit, the Major. She had laid aside her bonnet, and now appeared in a highly aristocratic and classical cap, meeting beneath her chin: a style of head-dress so admirably adapted to her countenance, that if the late Mr. Grimaldi had appeared in the lappets of Mrs. Siddons, a more complete effect could not have been produced.

Martin handed her to a chair. Her first words arrested him before he could get back to his own seat.

"Pray, sir!" said Mrs. Hominy, "where do you hail from?"

"I am afraid I am dull of comprehension," answered Martin, "being extremely tired; but, upon my word, I don't understand you."

Mrs. Hominy shook her head with a melancholy smile that said, not inexpressively, "They corrupt even the language in that old country!" and added then, as coming down a step or two to meet his low capacity, "Where was you rose?"

"Oh!" said Martin, "I was born in Kent."

"And how do you like our country, sir?" asked Mrs. Hominy.

"Very much indeed," said Martin, half asleep. "At least—that is—pretty well, ma'am."

"Most strangers—and partick'larly Britishers—are much surprised by what they see in the United States," remarked Mrs. Hominy.

"They have excellent reason to be so, ma'am," said Martin. "I never was so much surprised in all my life."

"Our institutions make our people smart much, sir?" Mrs. Hominy remarked.

"The most short-sighted man could see that at a glance, with his naked eye," said Martin.

Mrs. Hominy was a philosopher and an authoress, and consequently had a pretty strong digestion; but this coarse, this indecorous phrase, was almost too much for her. For a gentleman sitting alone with a lady—although the door *was* open—to talk about a naked eye!

A long interval elapsed before even she—woman of masculine and towering intellect though she was—could call up fortitude enough to resume the conversation. But Mrs. Hominy was a traveller. Mrs. Hominy was a writer of reviews and analytical disquisitions. Mrs. Hominy had had her letters from abroad, beginning "My ever dearest blank," and signed "The Mother of the Modern Gracchi" (meaning the married Miss Hominy), regularly printed in a public journal, with all the indignation in capitals, and all the sarcasm in italics. Mrs. Hominy had looked on foreign countries with the eye of a perfect republican hot from the model oven; and Mrs. Hominy could talk (or write) about them

by the hour together. So Mrs. Hominy at last came down on Martin heavily, and as he was fast asleep, she had it all her own way, and bruised him to her heart's content.

It is no great matter what Mrs. Hominy said, save that she had learnt it from the cant of a class, and a large class, of her fellow-countrymen, who, in their every word, avow themselves to be as senseless to the high principles on which America sprang, a nation, into life, as any Orson in her legislative halls. Who are no more capable of feeling, or of caring if they did feel, that by reducing their own country to the ebb of honest men's contempt, they put in hazard the rights of nations yet unborn, and very progress of the human race, than are the swine who wallow in their streets. Who think that crying out to other nations, old in their iniquity, "We are no worse than you!" (No worse!) is high defence and vantage ground enough for that Republic, but yesterday let loose upon her noble course, and but to-day so maimed and lame, so full of sores and ulcers, foul to the eye and almost hopeless to the sense, that her best friends turn from the loathsome creature with disgust. Who, having by their ancestors declared and won their Independence, because they would not bend the knee to certain Public vices and corruptions and would not abrogate the truth, run riot in the Bad, and turn their backs upon the Good; and lying down contented with the wretched boast that other Temples also are of glass, and stones which batter theirs may be flung back; show themselves, in that alone, as immeasurably behind the import of the trust they hold, and as unworthy to possess it, as if the sordid hucksterings of all their little governments—each one a kingdom in its small depravity—were brought into a heap for evidence against them.

Martin by degrees became so far awake, that he had a sense of a terrible oppression on his mind; an imperfect dream that he had murdered a particular friend, and couldn't get rid of the body. When his eyes opened it was staring him full in the face. There was the horrible Hominy, talking deep truths in a melodious snuffle, and pouring forth her mental endowments to such an extent that the Major's bitterest enemy, hearing her, would have forgiven him from the bottom of his heart. Martin might have done something desperate if the gong had not sounded for supper; but sound it did most opportunely; and having stationed Mrs. Hominy at the upper end of the table, he took refuge at the lower end himself; whence, after a hasty meal, he stole away, while the lady

was yet busied with dried beef and a whole saucer-full of pickled fixings.

It would be difficult to give an adequate idea of Mrs. Hominy's freshness next day, or of the avidity with which she went headlong into moral philosophy at breakfast. Some little additional degree of asperity, perhaps, was visible in her features, but not more than the pickles would have naturally produced. All that day she clung to Martin. She sat beside him while he received his friends—for there was another Reception, yet more numerous than the former—propounded theories, and answered imaginary objections: so that Martin really began to think he must be dreaming, and speaking for two; quoted interminable passages from certain essays on government, written by herself; used the Major's pocket-handkerchief as if the snuffle were a temporary malady, of which she was determined to rid herself by some means or other; and, in short, was such a remarkable companion, that Martin quite settled it between himself and his conscience, that in any new settlement it would be absolutely necessary to have such a person knocked on the head for the general peace of society.

In the meantime Mark was busy, from early in the morning until late at night, in getting on board the steamboat such provisions, tools, and other necessaries, as they had been forewarned it would be wise to take. The purchase of these things, and the settlement of their bill at the National, reduced their finances to so low an ebb, that if the captain had delayed his departure any longer, they would have been in almost as bad a plight as the unfortunate poorer emigrants, who (seduced on board by solemn advertisement) had been living on the lower deck a whole week, and exhausting their miserable stock of provisions before the voyage commenced. There they were, all huddled together, with the engine and the fires. Farmers who had never seen a plough; woodmen who had never used an axe; builders who couldn't make a box; cast out of their own land, with not a hand to aid them; newly come into an unknown world, children in helplessness, but men in wants—with younger children at their backs, to live or die as it might happen!

The morning came; and they would start at noon. Noon came, and they would start at night. But nothing is eternal in this world: not even the procrastination of an American skipper: and at night all was ready.

Dispirited and weary to the last degree, but a greater lion than ever (he had done nothing all the afternoon but answer letters from strangers: half of them about nothing: half about borrow-

ing money: and all requiring an instantaneous reply), Martin walked down to the wharf, through a concourse of people, with Mrs. Hominy upon his arm; and went on board. But Mark was bent on solving the riddle of this lion-ship, if he could; and so, not without the risk of being left behind, ran back to the hotel.

' Captain Kedgick was sitting in the colonnade, with a julep on his knee, and a cigar in his mouth. He caught Mark's eye, and said:

"Why, what the 'Tamal brings you here?"

"I'll tell you plainly what it is, Captain," said Mark. "I want to ask you a question."

"A man may *ask* a question, so he may," returned Kedgick; strongly implying that another man might not answer a question, so he mightn't.

"What have they been making so much of him for, now?" said Mark, slyly. "Come!"

"Our people like excitement," answered Kedgick, sucking his cigar.

"But how has he excited 'em?" asked Mark.

The Captain looked at him as if he were half inclined to unburden his mind of a capital joke.

"You air a going?" he said.

"Going!" cried Mark. "Ain't every moment precious?"

"Our people like excitement," said the Captain, whispering. "He ain't like emigrants in gin'ral; and he excited 'em along of this;" he winked and burst into a smothered laugh; "along of this. Scadder is a smart man, and—and—nobody as goes to Eden ever comes back a-live!"

The wharf was close at hand, and at that instant Mark could hear them shouting out his name—could even hear Martin calling to him to make haste, or they would be separated. It was too late to mend the matter, or put any face upon it but the best. He gave the Captain a parting benediction, and ran off like a racehorse.

"Mark! Mark!" cried Martin.

"Here am I, sir!" shouted Mark, suddenly replying from the edge of the quay, and leaping at a bound on board. "Never was half so jolly, sir. All right. Haul in! Go a-head!"

The sparks from the wood fire streamed upward from the two chimneys, as if the vessel were a great firework just lighted; and they roared away upon the dark water.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MARTIN AND HIS PARTNER TAKE POSSESSION OF THEIR ESTATE. THE JOYFUL OCCASION INVOLVES SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF EDEN.

THERE happened to be on board the steamboat several gentlemen passengers, of the

same stamp as Martin's New York friend Mr. Bevan; and in their society he was cheerful and happy. They released him as well as they could from the intellectual entanglements of Mrs. Hominy; and exhibited, in all they said and did, so much good sense and high feeling, that he could not like them too well. "If this were a republic of Intellect and Worth," he said, "instead of vapouring and jobbing, they would not want the levers to keep it in motion."

"Having good tools, and using bad ones," returned Mr. Tapley, "would look as if they was rather a poor sort of carpenters, sir, wouldn't it?"

Martin nodded. "As if their work were infinitely above their powers and purpose, Mark; and they botched it in consequence."

"The best on it is," said Mark, "that when they do happen to make a decent stroke; such as better workmen, with no such opportunities, make every day of their lives and think nothing of; they begin to sing out so surprising loud. Take notice of my words, sir. If ever the defaulting part of this here country pays its debts—along of finding that not paying 'em won't do in a commercial point of view, you see, and is inconvenient in its consequences—they'll take such a shine out of it, and make such bragging speeches, that a man might suppose no borrowed money had ever been paid afore, since the world was first begun. That's the way they gammon each other, sir. Bless you, I know 'em. Take notice of my words, now!"

"You seem to be growing profoundly sagacious!" cried Martin, laughing.

"Whether that is," thought Mark, "because I'm a day's journey nearer Eden, and am brightening up, afore I die, I can't say. Praps by the time I get there, I shall have growed into a prophet."

He gave no utterance to these sentiments; but the excessive joviality they inspired within him, and the merriment they brought upon his shining face, were quite enough for Martin. Although he might sometimes profess to make light of his partner's inexhaustible cheerfulness, and might sometimes, as in the case of Zephaniah Scadder, find him too jocose a commentator, he was always sensible of the effect of his example in rousing him to hopefulness and courage. Whether he were in the humour to profit by it, mattered not a jot. It was contagious, and he could not choose but be affected.

At first they parted with some of their passengers once or twice a day, and took in others to replace them. But by degrees the towns upon their route became more thinly scattered;

and for many hours together they would see no other habitations than the huts of the woodcutters, where the vessel stopped for fuel. Sky, wood, and water, all the livelong day; and heat that blistered everything it touched.

On they toiled through great solitudes, where the trees upon the banks grew thick and close; and floated in the stream; and held up shrivelled arms from out the river's depths; and slid down from the margin of the land: half growing, half decaying, in the miry water. On through the weary day and melancholy night: beneath the burning sun, and in the mist and vapour of the evening: on, until return appeared impossible, and restoration to their home a miserable dream.

They had now but few people on board, and these few were as flat, as dull and stagnant, as the vegetation that oppressed their eyes. No sound of cheerfulness or hope was heard; no pleasant talk beguiled the tardy time; no little group made common cause against the dull depression of the scene. But that, at certain periods, they swallowed food together from a common trough, it might have been old Charon's boat, conveying melancholy shades to judgment.

At length they drew near New Thermopylæ; where, that same evening, Mrs. Hominy would disembark. A gleam of comfort sunk into Martin's bosom when she told him this. Mark needed none; but he was not displeased.

It was almost night when they came alongside the landing-place—a steep bank with an hotel, like a barn, on the top of it: a wooden store or two; and a few scattered sheds.

"You sleep here to-night, and go on in the morning, I suppose, ma'am?" said Martin.

"Where should I go on to?" cried the mother of the modern Gracchi.

"To New Thermopylæ."

"My! ain't I there?" said Mrs. Hominy.

Martin looked for it all round the darkening panorama; but he couldn't see it, and was obliged to say so.

"Why that's it!" cried Mrs. Hominy, pointing to the sheds just mentioned.

"That!" exclaimed Martin.

"Ah! that; and work it which way you will, it whips Eden," said Mrs. Hominy, nodding her head with great expression.

The married Miss Hominy, who had come on board with her husband, gave to this statement her most unqualified support, as did that gentleman also. Martin gratefully declined their invitation to regale himself at their house during the half hour of the vessel's stay; and having escorted Mrs. Hominy and the red pocket-handkerchief (which was still on active service)

safely across the gangway, returned in a thoughtful mood to watch the emigrants as they removed their goods ashore.

Mark, as he stood beside him, glanced in his face from time to time; anxious to discover what effect this dialogue had had upon him, and not unwilling that his hopes should be dashed before they reached their destination, so that the blow he feared, might be broken in its fall. But saving that he sometimes looked up quickly at the poor erections on the hill, he gave him no clue to what was passing in his mind, until they were again upon their way.

"Mark," he said then, "are there really none but ourselves on board this boat who are bound for Eden?"

"None at all, sir. Most of 'em, as you know, have stopped short; and the few that are left are going further on. What matters that! More room there for us, sir."

"Oh, to be sure!" said Martin. "But I was thinking"—and there he paused.

"Yes, sir?" observed Mark.

"How odd it was that the people should have arranged to try their fortune at a wretched hole like that, for instance, when there is such a much better, and such a very different kind of place, near at hand, as one may say."

He spoke in a tone so very different from his usual confidence, and with such an obvious dread of Mark's reply, that the good-natured fellow was full of pity.

"Why, you know, sir," said Mark, as gently as he could by any means insinuate the observation, "we must guard against being too sanguine. There's no occasion for it, either, because we're determined to make the best of everything, after we know the worst of it. Ain't we, sir?"

Martin looked at him, but answered not a word.

"Even Eden, you know, ain't all built," said Mark.

"In the name of Heaven, man," cried Martin angrily, "don't talk of Eden in the same breath with that place. Are you mad? There—God forgive me!—don't think harshly of me for my temper!"

After that, he turned away, and walked to and fro upon the deck full two hours. Nor did he speak again, except to say "Good night," until next day; nor even then upon this subject, but on other topics quite foreign to the purpose.

As they proceeded further on their track, and came more and more towards their journey's end, the monotonous desolation of the scene increased to that degree, that for any redeeming

feature it presented to their eyes, they might have entered, in the body, on the grim domains of Giant Despair. A flat morass, bestrewn with fallen timber; a marsh on which the good growth of the earth seemed to have been wrecked and cast away, that from its decomposing ashes vile and ugly things might rise; where the very trees took the aspect of huge weeds, begotten of the slime from which they sprung, by the hot sun that burnt them up; where fatal maladies, seeking whom they might infect, came forth at night, in misty shapes, and creeping out upon the water, hunted them like spectres until day; where even the blessed sun, shining down on festering elements of corruption and disease, became a horror; this was the realm of Hope through which they moved.

At last they stopped. At Eden too. The waters of the Deluge might have left it but a week before: so choked with slime and matted growth was the hideous swamp which bore that name.

There being no depth of water close in shore, they landed from the vessel's boat, with all their goods beside them. There were a few log-houses visible among the dark trees; the best, a cow-shed or a rude stable; but for the wharves, the market-place, the public buildings—

"Here comes an Edener," said Mark. "He'll get us help to carry these things up. Keep a good heart, sir. Hallo there!"

The man advanced towards them through the thickening gloom, very slowly: leaning on a stick. As he drew nearer, they observed that he was pale and worn, and that his anxious eyes were deeply sunken in his head. His dress of homespun blue hung about him in rags; his feet and head were bare. He sat down on a stump half-way, and beckoned them to come to him. When they complied, he put his hand upon his side as if in pain, and while he fetched his breath stared at them, wondering.

"Strangers!" he exclaimed, as soon as he could speak.

"The very same," said Mark. "How are you, sir?"

"I've had the fever very bad," he answered faintly. "I haven't stood upright these many weeks. Those are your notions I see," pointing to their property.

"Yes, sir," said Mark, "they are. You couldn't recommend us some one as would lend a hand to help carry 'em up to the—to the town, could you, sir?"

"My eldest son would do it if he could," replied the man; "but to-day he has his chill

upon him, and is lying wrapped up in the blankets. My youngest died last week."

"I'm sorry for it, governor, with all my heart," said Mark, shaking him by the hand. "Don't mind us. Come along with me, and I'll give you an arm back. The goods is safe enough, sir,"—to Martin,—“there ain't many people about, to make away with 'em. What a comfort that is!”

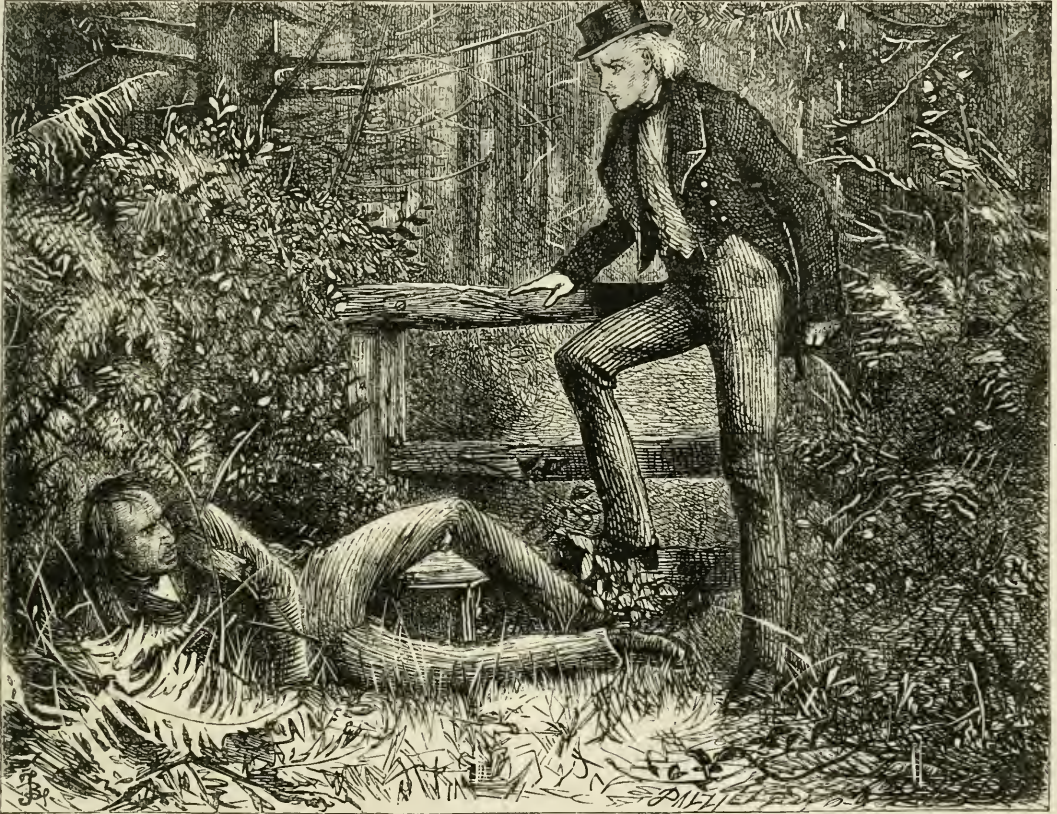
"No," cried the man. "You must look for such folk here," knocking his stick upon the

ground, "or yonder in the bush, towards the north. We've buried most of 'em. The rest have gone away. Them that we have here, don't come out at night."

"The night air ain't quite wholesome, I suppose?" said Mark.

"It's deadly poison," was the settler's answer.

Mark showed no more uneasiness than if it had been commended to him as ambrosia; but he gave the man his arm, and as they went along explained to him the nature of their pur-



"HE FLOURISHED HIS STICK OVER TOM'S HEAD; BUT IN A MOMENT IT WAS SPINNING HARMLESSLY IN THE AIR, AND JONAS HIMSELF LAY SPRAWLING IN THE DITCH."

chase, and inquired where it lay. Close to his own log-house, he said; so close that he had used their dwelling as a store-house for some corn: they must excuse it that night, but he would endeavour to get it taken out upon the morrow. He then gave them to understand, as an additional scrap of local chit-chat, that he had buried the last proprietor with his own hands; a piece of information which Mark also received without the least abatement of his equanimity.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 13.

In a word, he conducted them to a miserable cabin, rudely constructed of the trunks of trees; the door of which had either fallen down or been carried away long ago; and which was consequently open to the wild landscape and the dark night. Saving for the little store he had mentioned, it was perfectly bare of all furniture; but they had left a chest upon the landing-place, and he gave them a rude torch in lieu of candle. This latter acquisition Mark planted in the hearth, and then declaring that

the mansion "looked quite comfortable," hurried Martin off again to help bring up the chest. And all the way to the landing-place and back, Mark talked incessantly: as if he would infuse into his partner's breast some faint belief that they had arrived under the most auspicious and cheerful of all imaginable circumstances.

But many a man who would have stood within a home dismantled, strong in his passion and design of vengeance, has had the firmness of his nature conquered by the razing of an air-built castle. When the log-hut received them for the second time, Martin lay down upon the ground, and wept aloud.

"Lord love you, sir!" cried Mr. Tapley, in great terror; "don't do that! Don't do that, sir! Anything but that! It never helped man, woman, or child over the lowest fence yet, sir, and it never will. Besides its being of no use to you, it's worse than of no use to me, for the least sound of it will knock me flat down. I can't stand up agin it, sir. Anything but that."

There is no doubt he spoke the truth, for the extraordinary alarm with which he looked at Martin as he paused upon his knees before the chest, in the act of unlocking it, to say these words, sufficiently confirmed him.

"I ask your forgiveness a thousand times, my dear fellow," said Martin. "I couldn't have helped it, if death had been the penalty."

"Ask my forgiveness!" said Mark, with his accustomed cheerfulness; as he proceeded to unpack the chest. "The head partner a asking forgiveness of Co., eh? There must be something wrong in the firm when that happens. I must have the books inspected, and the accounts gone over immediate. Here we are. Everything in its proper place. Here's the salt pork. Here's the biscuit. Here's the whiskey—uncommon good it smells too. Here's the tin pot. This tin pot's a small fortun' in itself! Here's the blankets. Here's the axe. Who says we ain't got a first-rate fit out? I feel as if I was a cadet gone out to Indy, and my noble father was chairman of the Board of Directors. Now, when I've got some water from the stream afore the door and mixed the grog," cried Mark, running out to suit the action to the word, "there's a supper ready, comprising every delicacy of the season. Here we are, sir, all complete. For what we are going to receive, et cetera. Lord bless you, sir, it's very like a gipsy party!"

It was impossible not to take heart, in the company of such a man as this. Martin sat upon the ground beside the box; took out his knife; and ate and drank sturdily.

"Now you see," said Mark, when they had

made a hearty meal; "with your knife and mine, I sticks this blanket right afore the door, or where, in a state of high civilisation, the door would be. And very neat it looks. Then I stops the aperture below, by putting the chest agin it. And very neat *that* looks. Then there's your blanket, sir. Then here's mine. And what's to hinder our passing a good night?"

For all his light-hearted speaking, it was long before he slept himself. He wrapped his blanket round him, put the axe ready to his hand, and lay across the threshold of the door: too anxious and too watchful to close his eyes. The novelty of their dreary situation, the dread of some rapacious animal or human enemy, the terrible uncertainty of their means of subsistence, the apprehension of death, the immense distance and the hosts of obstacles between themselves and England, were fruitful sources of disquiet in the deep silence of the night. Though Martin would have had him think otherwise, Mark felt that he was waking also, and a prey to the same reflections. This was almost worse than all, for if he began to brood over their miseries instead of trying to make head against them, there could be little doubt that such a state of mind would powerfully assist the influence of the pestilent climate. Never had the light of day been half so welcome to his eyes, as when awaking from a fitful doze, Mark saw it shining through the blanket in the doorway.

He stole out gently, for his companion was sleeping now; and having refreshed himself by washing in the river, where it flowed before the door, took a rough survey of the settlement. There were not above a score of cabins in the whole; half of these appeared untenanted; all were rotten and decayed. The most tottering, abject, and forlorn among them, was called, with great propriety, the Bank, and National Credit Office. It had some feeble props about it, but was settling deep down in the mud, past all recovery.

Here and there, an effort had been made to clear the land, and something like a field had been marked out, where, among the stumps and ashes of burnt trees, a scanty crop of Indian corn was growing. In some quarters, a snake or zigzag fence had been begun, but in no instance had it been completed; and the fallen logs, half hidden in the soil, lay mouldering away. Three or four meagre dogs, wasted and vexed with hunger; some long-legged pigs, wandering away into the woods in search of food; some children, nearly naked, gazing at him from the huts; were all the living things he saw. A fetid vapour, hot and sicken-

ing as the breath of an oven, rose up from the earth, and hung on everything around; and as his foot-prints sunk into the marshy ground, a black ooze started forth to blot them out.

Their own land was mere forest. The trees had grown so thick and close that they shouldered one another out of their places, and the weakest, forced into shapes of strange distortion, languished like cripples. The best were stunted, from the pressure and the want of room; and high about the stems of all, grew long rank grass, dank weeds, and frowsy underwood: not devisable into their separate kinds, but tangled all together in a heap; a jungle deep and dark, with neither earth nor water at its roots, but putrid matter, formed of the pulpy offal of the two, and of their own corruption.

He went down to the landing-place, where they had left their goods last night; and there he found some half-dozen men—wan and forlorn to look at, but ready enough to assist—who helped him to carry them to the log-house. They shook their heads in speaking of the settlement, and had no comfort to give him. Those who had the means of going away, had all deserted it. They who were left had lost their wives, their children, friends, or brothers there, and suffered much themselves. Most of them were ill then; none were the men they had been once. They frankly offered their assistance and advice, and leaving him for that time, went sadly off upon their several tasks.

Martin was by this time stirring; but he had greatly changed, even in one night. He was very pale and languid; he spoke of pains and weakness in his limbs, and complained that his sight was dim, and his voice feeble. Increasing in his own briskness as the prospect grew more and more dismal, Mark brought away a door from one of the deserted houses, and fitted it to their own habitation; then went back again for a rude bench he had observed, with which he presently returned in triumph; and having put this piece of furniture outside the house, arranged the notable tin pot and other such moveables upon it, that it might represent a dresser or a sideboard. Greatly satisfied with this arrangement, he next rolled their cask of flour into the house, and set it up on end in one corner, where it served for a side-table. No better dining-table could be required than the chest, which he solemnly devoted to that useful service thenceforth. Their blankets, clothes, and the like, he hung on pegs and nails. And lastly, he brought forth a great placard (which Martin in the exultation of his heart had prepared with his own hands at the National Hotel), bearing

the inscription, CHUZZLEWIT & Co., ARCHITECTS AND SURVEVORS, which he displayed upon the most conspicuous part of the premises, with as much gravity as if the thriving city of Eden had had a real existence, and they expected to be overwhelmed with business.

"These here tools," said Mark, bringing forward Martin's case of instruments and sticking the compasses upright in a stump before the door, "shall be set out in the open air to show that we come provided. And now, if any gentleman wants a house built, he'd better give his orders, afore we're other ways bespoke."

Considering the intense heat of the weather, this was not a bad morning's work; but without pausing for a moment, though he was streaming at every pore, Mark vanished into the house again, and presently reappeared with a hatchet: intent on performing some impossibilities with that implement.

"Here's a ugly old tree in the way, sir," he observed, "which'll be all the better down. We can build the oven in the afternoon. There never was such a handy spot for clay as Eden is. That's convenient, anyhow."

But Martin gave him no answer. He had sat the whole time with his head upon his hands, gazing at the current as it rolled swiftly by; thinking, perhaps, how fast it moved towards the open sea, the high road to the home he never would behold again.

Not even the vigorous strokes which Mark dealt at the tree, awoke him from his mournful meditation. Finding all his endeavours to rouse him of no use, Mark stopped in his work and came towards him.

"Don't give in, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

"Oh, Mark," returned his friend, "what have I done in all my life that has deserved this heavy fate?"

"Why, sir," returned Mark, "for the matter of that, ev'rybody as is here might say the same thing; many of 'em with better reason p'raps than you or me. Hold up, sir. Do something. Couldn't you ease your mind, now, don't you think, by making some personal observations in a letter to Scadder?"

"No," said Martin, shaking his head sorrowfully; "I am past that."

"But if you're past that already," returned Mark, "you must be ill and ought to be attended to."

"Don't mind me," said Martin. "Do the best you can for yourself. You'll soon have only yourself to consider. And then God speed you home, and forgive me for bringing you here! I am destined to die in this place. I felt it the

instant I set foot upon the shore. Sleeping or waking, Mark, I dreamed it all last night."

"I said you must be ill," returned Mark, tenderly, "and now I'm sure of it. A touch of fever and ague caught on these rivers, I dare say; but bless you, *that's* nothing. It's only a seasoning; and we must all be seasoned, one way or another. That's religion, that is, you know," said Mark.

He only sighed and shook his head.

"Wait half a minute," said Mark cheerily, "till I run up to one of our neighbours and ask what's best to be took, and borrow a little of it to give you; and to-morrow you'll find yourself as strong as ever again. I won't be gone a minute. Don't give in, while I'm away, whatever you do!"

Throwing down his hatchet, he sped away immediately, but stopped when he had got a little distance, and looked back: then hurried on again.

"Now, Mr. Tapley," said Mark, giving himself a tremendous blow in the chest by way of reviver, "just you attend to what I've got to say. Things is looking about as bad as they *can* look, young man. You'll not have such another opportunity for showing your jolly disposition, my fine fellow, as long as you live. And therefore, 'Tapley, Now's your time to come out strong; or Never!'"

CHAPTER XXIV.

REPORTS PROGRESS IN CERTAIN HOMELY MATTERS OF LOVE, HATRED, JEALOUSY, AND REVENGE.

HALLO, Pecksniff!" cried Mr. Jonas from the parlour. "Isn't somebody agoing to open that precious old door of yours?"

"Immediately, Mr. Jonas. Immediately."

"Ecod," muttered the orphan, "not before it's time neither. Whoever it is, has knocked three times, and each one loud enough to wake the—" he had such a repugnance to the idea of waking the Dead, that he stopped even then with the words upon his tongue, and said, instead, "the Seven Sleepers."

"Immediately, Mr. Jonas; immediately," repeated Pecksniff. "Thomas Pinch"—he couldn't make up his mind, in his great agitation, whether to call Tom his dear friend or a villain, so he shook his fist at him *pro tem.*—"go up to my daughters' room, and tell them

who is here. Say, Silence. Silence! Do you hear me, sir?"

"Directly, sir!" cried Tom, departing, in a state of much amazement, on his errand.

"You'll—ha ha ha!—you'll excuse me, Mr. Jonas, if I close this door a moment, will you?" said Pecksniff. "This may be a professional call. Indeed I am pretty sure it is. Thank you." Then Mr. Pecksniff, gently warbling a rustic stave, put on his garden hat, seized a spade, and opened the street door: calmly appearing on the threshold, as if he thought he had, from his vineyard, heard a modest rap, but was not quite certain.

Seeing a gentleman and lady before him, he started back in as much confusion as a good man with a crystal conscience might betray in mere surprise. Recognition came upon him the next moment, and he cried:

"Mr. Chuzzlewit! Can I believe my eyes! My dear sir; my good sir! A joyful hour; a happy hour indeed. Pray, my dear sir, walk in. You find me in my garden-dress. You will excuse it, I know. It is an ancient pursuit, gardening. Primitive, my dear sir; for, if I am not mistaken, Adam was the first of our calling. *My* Eve, I grieve to say, is no more, sir; but"—here he pointed to his spade, and shook his head, as if he were not cheerful without an effort—"but I do a little bit of Adam still."

He had by this time got them into the best parlour, where the portrait by Spiller, and the bust by Spoker, were.

"My daughters," said Mr. Pecksniff, "will be overjoyed. If I could feel weary upon such a theme, I should have been worn out long ago, my dear sir, by their constant anticipation of this happiness, and their repeated allusions to our meeting at Mrs. Todgers's. Their fair young friend, too," said Mr. Pecksniff, "whom they so desire to know and love—indeed to know her, *is* to love—I hope I see her well. I hope in saying, 'Welcome to my humble roof!' I find some echo in her own sentiments. If features are an index to the heart, I have no fears of that. An extremely engaging expression of countenance, Mr. Chuzzlewit, my dear sir—very much so!"

"Mary," said the old man, "Mr. Pecksniff flatters you. But flattery from him is worth the having. He is not a dealer in it, and it comes from his heart. We thought Mr.——"

"Pinch," said Mary.

"Mr. Pinch would have arrived before us, Pecksniff."

"He did arrive before you, my dear sir," retorted Pecksniff, raising his voice for the edifica-

tion of Tom upon the stairs, "and was about, I dare say, to tell me of your coming, when I begged him first to knock at my daughters' chamber, and inquire after Charity, my dear child, who is not so well as I could wish. No," said Mr. Pecksniff, answering their looks, "I am sorry to say, she is not. It is merely an hysterical affection; nothing more. I am not uneasy. Mr. Pinch! Thomas!" exclaimed Pecksniff, in his kindest accents. "Pray come in. I shall make no stranger of you. Thomas is a friend of mine of rather long standing, Mr. Chuzzlewit, you must know."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom. "You introduce me very kindly, and speak of me in terms of which I am very proud."

"Old Thomas!" cried his master, pleasantly, "God bless you!"

Tom reported that the young ladies would appear directly, and that the best refreshments which the house afforded were even then in preparation, under their joint superintendence. While he was speaking, the old man looked at him intently, though with less harshness than was common to him; nor did the mutual embarrassment of Tom and the young lady, to whatever cause he attributed it, seem to escape his observation.

"Pecksniff," he said after a pause, rising and taking him aside towards the window, "I was much shocked on hearing of my brother's death. We had been strangers for many years. My only comfort is, that he must have lived the happier and better man for having associated no hopes or schemes with me. Peace to his memory! We were playfellows once; and it would have been better for us both if we had died then."

Finding him in this gentle mood, Mr. Pecksniff began to see another way out of his difficulties, besides the casting overboard of Jonas.

"That any man, my dear sir, could possibly be the happier for not knowing you," he returned, "you will excuse my doubting. But that Mr. Anthony, in the evening of his life, was happy in the affection of his excellent son—a pattern, my dear sir, a pattern to all sons—and in the care of a distant relation, who, however lowly in his means of serving him, had no bounds to his inclination; I can inform you."

"How's this?" said the old man. "You are not a legatee?"

"You don't," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a melancholy pressure of his hand, "quite understand my nature yet, I find. No, sir, I am not a legatee. I am proud to say I am not a legatee. I am proud to say that neither of my children

is a legatee. And yet, sir, I was with him at his own request. *He* understood me somewhat better, sir. He wrote and said, 'I am sick. I am sinking. Come to me!' I went to him. I sat beside his bed, sir, and I stood beside his grave. Yes, at the risk of offending even *you*, I did it, sir. Though the avowal should lead to our instant separation, and to the severing of those tender ties between us which have recently been formed, I make it. But I am not a legatee," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling dispassionately; "and I never expected to be a legatee. I knew better!"

"His son a pattern!" cried old Martin. "How can you tell me that? My brother had in his wealth the usual doom of wealth, and root of misery. He carried his corrupting influence with him, go where he would; and shed it round him, even on his hearth. It made of his own child a greedy expectant, who measured every day and hour the lessening distance between his father and the grave, and cursed his tardy progress on that dismal road."

"No!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, boldly. "Not at all, sir."

"But I saw that shadow in his house," said Martin Chuzzlewit, "the last time we met, and warned him of its presence. I know it when I see it, do I not? I, who have lived within it all these years."

"I deny it," Mr. Pecksniff answered, warmly. "I deny it altogether. That bereaved young man is now in this house, sir, seeking in change of scene the peace of mind he has lost. Shall I be backward in doing justice to that young man, when even undertakers and coffin-makers have been moved by the conduct he has exhibited; when even mutes have spoken in his praise, and the medical man hasn't known what to do with himself in the excitement of his feelings! There is a person of the name of Gamp, sir—Mrs. Gamp—ask her. She saw Mr. Jonas in a trying time. Ask *her*, sir. She is respectable, but not sentimental, and will state the fact. A line addressed to Mrs. Gamp, at the Bird Shop, Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, London, will meet with every attention, I have no doubt. Let her be examined, my good sir. Strike, but hear! leap, Mr. Chuzzlewit, but look! Forgive me, my dear sir," said Mr. Pecksniff taking both his hands, "if I am warm; but I am honest, and must state the truth."

In proof of the character he gave himself, Mr. Pecksniff suffered tears of honesty to ooze out of his eyes.

The old man gazed at him for a moment with a look of wonder, repeating to himself, "Here

now! In this house!" But he mastered his surprise, and said, after a pause:

"Let me see him."

"In a friendly spirit, I hope?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Forgive me, sir, but he is in the receipt of my humble hospitality."

"I said," replied the old man, "let me see him. If I were disposed to regard him in any other than a friendly spirit, I should have said, keep us apart."

"Certainly, my dear sir. So you would. You are frankness itself, I know. I will break this happiness to him," said Mr. Pecksniff as he left the room, "if you will excuse me for a minute—gently."

He paved the way to the disclosure so very gently; that a quarter of an hour elapsed before he returned with Mr. Jonas. In the meantime the young ladies had made their appearance, and the table had been set out for the refreshment of the travellers.

Now, however well Mr. Pecksniff, in his morality, had taught Jonas the lesson of dutiful behaviour to his uncle, and however perfectly Jonas, in the cunning of his nature, had learnt it, that young man's bearing, when presented to his father's brother, was anything but manly or engaging. Perhaps, indeed, so singular a mixture of defiance and obsequiousness, of fear and hardihood, of dogged sullenness and an attempt at cringing and propitiation, never was expressed in any one human figure as in that of Jonas, when, having raised his downcast eyes to Martin's face, he let them fall again, and uneasily closing and unclosing his hands without a moment's intermission, stood swinging himself from side to side, waiting to be addressed.

"Nephew," said the old man. "You have been a dutiful son, I hear."

"As dutiful as sons in general, I suppose," returned Jonas, looking up and down once more. "I don't brag to have been any better than other sons; but I haven't been any worse I dare say."

"A pattern to all sons, I am told," said the old man, glancing towards Mr. Pecksniff.

"Ecod!" said Jonas, looking up again for a moment, and shaking his head, "I've been as good a son as ever you were a brother. It's the pot and the kettle, if you come to that."

"You speak bitterly, in the violence of your regret," said Martin after a pause. "Give me your hand."

Jonas did so, and was almost at his ease. "Pecksniff," he whispered, as they drew their chairs about the table; "I gave him as good as he brought, eh? He had better look at home, before he looks out of window, I think?"

Mr. Pecksniff only answered by a nudge of the elbow, which might either be construed into an indignant remonstrance or a cordial assent; but which, in any case, was an emphatic admonition to his chosen son-in-law to be silent. He then proceeded to do the honours of the house with his accustomed ease and amiability.

But not even Mr. Pecksniff's guileless merriment could set such a party at their ease, or reconcile materials so utterly discordant and conflicting as those with which he had to deal. The unspeakable jealousy and hatred which that night's explanation had sown in Charity's breast, was not to be so easily kept down; and more than once it showed itself in such intensity, as seemed to render a full disclosure of all the circumstances, then and there, impossible to be avoided. The beauteous Merry, too, with all the glory of her conquest fresh upon her, so probed and lanced the rankling disappointment of her sister by her capricious airs and thousand little trials of Mr. Jonas's obedience, that she almost goaded her into a fit of madness, and obliged her to retire from table in a burst of passion, hardly less vehement than that to which she had abandoned herself in the first tumult of her wrath. The constraint imposed upon the family by the presence among them for the first time of Mary Graham (for by that name old Martin Chuzzlewit had introduced her) did not at all improve this state of things: gentle and quiet though her manner was. Mr. Pecksniff's situation was peculiarly trying: for, what with having constantly to keep the peace between his daughters; to maintain a reasonable show of affection and unity in his household; to curb the growing ease and gaiety of Jonas, which vented itself in sundry insolences towards Mr. Pinch, and an indefinable coarseness of manner in reference to Mary (they being the two dependants); to make no mention at all of his having perpetually to conciliate his rich old relative, and to smooth down, or explain away, some of the ten thousand bad appearances and combinations of bad appearances, by which they were surrounded on that unlucky evening—what with having to do this, and it would be difficult to sum up how much more, without the least relief or assistance from anybody, it may be easily imagined that Mr. Pecksniff had in his enjoyment something more than that usual portion of alloy which is mixed up with the best of men's delights. Perhaps he had never in his life felt such relief as when old Martin, looking at his watch, announced that it was time to go.

"We have rooms," he said, "at the Dragon, for the present. I have a fancy for the evening

walk. The nights are dark just now: perhaps Mr. Pinch would not object to light us home?"

"My dear sir!" cried Pecksniff, "I shall be delighted. Merry, my child, the lantern."

"The lantern, I please, my dear," said Martin; "but I couldn't think of taking your father out of doors to-night; and, to be brief, I won't."

Mr. Pecksniff already had his hat in his hand, but it was so emphatically said that he paused.

"I take Mr. Pinch, or go alone," said Martin. "Which shall it be?"

"It shall be Thomas, sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "since you are so resolute upon it. Thomas, my friend, be very careful, if you please."

Tom was in some need of this injunction, for he felt so nervous, and trembled to such a degree, that he found it difficult to hold the lantern. How much more difficult when, at the old man's bidding, she drew her hand through his—Tom Pinch's—arm!

"And so, Mr. Pinch," said Martin, on the way, "you are very comfortably situated here; are you?"

Tom answered, with even more than his usual enthusiasm, that he was under obligations to Mr. Pecksniff which the devotion of a lifetime would but imperfectly repay.

"How long have you known my nephew?" asked Martin.

"Your nephew, sir!" faltered Tom.

"Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit," said Mary.

"Oh dear, yes," cried Tom, greatly relieved, for his mind was running upon Martin. "Certainly. I never spoke to him before to-night, sir."

"Perhaps half a lifetime will suffice for the acknowledgment of *his* kindness," observed the old man.

Tom felt that this was a rebuff for him, and could not but understand it as a left-handed hit at his employer. So he was silent. Mary felt that Mr. Pinch was not remarkable for presence of mind, and that he could not say too little under existing circumstances. So *she* was silent. The old man, disgusted by what in his suspicious nature he considered a shameless and fulsome puff of Mr. Pecksniff, which was a part of Tom's hired service and in which he was determined to persevere, set him down at once for a deceitful, servile, miserable fawner. So *he* was silent. And though they were all sufficiently uncomfortable, it is fair to say that Martin was perhaps the most so; for he had felt kindly towards Tom at first, and had been interested by his seeming simplicity.

"You're like the rest," he thought, glancing

at the face of the unconscious Tom. "You had nearly imposed upon me, but you have lost your labour. You're too zealous a toad-eater, and betray yourself, Mr. Pinch."

During the whole remainder of the walk, not another word was spoken. First among the meetings to which Tom had long looked forward with a beating heart, it was memorable for nothing but embarrassment and confusion. They parted at the Dragon door; and sighing as he extinguished the candle in the lantern, Tom turned back again over the gloomy fields.

As he approached the first stile, which was in a lonely part, made very dark by a plantation of young firs, a man slipped past him and went on before. Coming to the stile he stopped, and took his seat upon it. Tom was rather startled, and for a moment stood still; but he stepped forward again immediately, and went close up to him.

It was Jonas; swinging his legs to and fro, sucking the head of a stick, and looking with a sneer at Tom.

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom, "who would have thought of its being you! You followed us then?"

"What's that to you?" said Jonas. "Go to the devil!"

"You are not very civil, I think," remarked Tom.

"Civil enough for *you*," retorted Jonas. "Who are you?"

"One who has as good a right to common consideration as another," said Tom, mildly.

"You're a liar," said Jonas. "You haven't a right to any consideration. You haven't a right to anything. You're a pretty sort of fellow to talk about your rights, upon my soul! Ha, ha! —rights, too!"

"If you proceed in this way," returned Tom, reddening, "you will oblige me to talk about my wrongs. But I hope your joke is over."

"It's the way with you curs," said Mr. Jonas, "that when you know a man's in real earnest, you pretend to think he's joking, so that you may turn it off. But that won't do with me. It's too stale. Now just attend to me for a bit, Mr. Pitch, or Witch, or Stitch, or whatever your name is."

"My name is Pinch," observed Tom. "Have the goodness to call me by it."

"What! You mustn't even be called out of your name, mustn't you!" cried Jonas. "Pauper 'prentices are looking up, I think. Ecod, we manage 'em a little better in the city!"

"Never mind what you do in the city," said Tom. "What have you got to say to me?"

"Just this, Mister Pinch," retorted Jonas, thrusting his face so close to Tom's that Tom was obliged to retreat a step, "I advise you to keep your own counsel, and to avoid tittle-tattle, and not to cut in where you're not wanted. I've heard something of you, my friend, and your meek ways; and I recommend you to forget 'em till I'm married to one of Pecksniff's gals, and not to curry favour among my relations, but to leave the course clear. You know, when curs won't leave the course clear, they're whipped off; so this is kind advice. Do you understand? Eh? Damme, who are you," cried Jonas, with increased contempt, "that you should walk home with *them*, unless it was behind 'em, like any other servant out of livery?"

"Come!" cried Tom, "I see that you had better get off the stile, and let me pursue my way home. Make room for me, if you please."

"Don't think it!" said Jonas, spreading out his legs. "Not till I choose. And I don't choose now. What! You're afraid of my making you split upon some of your babbling just now, are you, Sneak?"

"I am not afraid of many things, I hope," said Tom; "and certainly not of anything that you will do. I am not a tale-bearer, and I despise all meanness. You quite mistake me. Ah!" cried Tom, indignantly. "Is this manly from one in your position to one in mine? Please to make room for me to pass. The less I say, the better."

"The less you say!" retorted Jonas, dangling his legs the more, and taking no heed of this request. "You say very little, don't you? Ecod, I should like to know what goes on between you and a vagabond member of my family. There's very little in that, too, I dare say!"

"I know no vagabond member of your family," cried Tom, stoutly.

"You do!" said Jonas.

"I don't," said Tom. "Your uncle's name-sake, if you mean him, is no vagabond. Any comparison between you and him"—Tom snapped his fingers at him, for he was rising fast in wrath—"is immeasurably to your disadvantage."

"Oh indeed!" sneered Jonas. "And what do you think of his deary—his beggarly leavings, eh, Mister Pinch?"

"I don't mean to say another word, or stay here another instant," replied Tom.

"As I told you before, you're a liar," said Jonas coolly. "You'll stay here till I give you leave to go. Now keep where you are, will you!"

He flourished his stick over Tom's head; but in a moment it was spinning harmlessly in the air, and Jonas himself lay sprawling in the ditch. In the momentary struggle for the stick, Tom had brought it into violent contact with his opponent's forehead; and the blood welled out profusely from a deep cut on the temple. Tom was first apprised of this by seeing that he pressed his handkerchief to the wounded part, and staggered as he rose: being stunned.

"Are you hurt?" said Tom. "I am very sorry. Lean on me for a moment. You can do that without forgiving me, if you still bear me malice. But I don't know why; for I never offended you before we met on this spot."

He made him no answer: not appearing at first to understand him, or even to know that he was hurt, though he several times took his handkerchief from the cut to look vacantly at the blood upon it. After one of these examinations, he looked at Tom, and then there was an expression in his features, which showed that he understood what had taken place, and would remember it.

Nothing more passed between them as they went home. Jonas kept a little in advance, and Tom Pinch sadly followed: thinking of the grief which the knowledge of this quarrel must occasion his excellent benefactor. When Jonas knocked at the door, Tom's heart beat high; higher when Miss Mercy answered it, and seeing her wounded lover, shrieked aloud; higher when he followed them into the family parlour; higher than at any other time when Jonas spoke.

"Don't make a noise about it," he said. "It's nothing worth mentioning. I didn't know the road; the night's very dark; and just as I came up with Mr. Pinch"—he turned his face towards Tom, but not his eyes—"I ran against a tree. It's only skin deep."

"Cold water, Merry, my child!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Brown paper! Scissors! A piece of old linen! Charity, my dear, make a bandage. Bless me, Mr. Jonas!"

"Oh, bother *your* nonsense," returned the gracious son-in-law elect. "Be of some use if you can. If you can't, get out!"

Miss Charity, though called upon to lend her aid, sat upright in one corner, with a smile upon her face, and didn't move a finger. Though Mercy laved the wound herself; and Mr. Pecksniff held the patient's head between his two hands, as if without that assistance it must inevitably come in half; and Tom Pinch, in his guilty agitation, shook a bottle of Dutch Drops until they were nothing but English Froth, and

in his other hand sustained a formidable carving-knife, really intended to reduce the swelling, but apparently designed for the ruthless infliction of another wound as soon as that was dressed; Charity rendered not the least assistance, nor uttered a word. But when Mr. Jonas's head was bound up, and he had gone to bed, and everybody else had retired, and the house was quiet, Mr. Pinch, as he sat mournfully on his bedstead, ruminating, heard a gentle tap at his door; and opening it, saw her, to his great astonishment, standing before him with her finger on her lip.

"Mr. Pinch," she whispered. "Dear Mr. Pinch! tell me the truth! You did that? There was some quarrel between you, and you struck him? I am sure of it!"

It was the first time she had ever spoken kindly to Tom, in all the many years they had passed together. He was stupefied with amazement.

"Was it so, or not?" she eagerly demanded.

"I was very much provoked," said Tom.

"Then it was?" cried Charity, with sparkling eyes.

"Ye-yes. We had a struggle for the path,"



"LOOK ABOUT YOU," HE SAID, POINTING TO THE GRAVES; "AND REMEMBER THAT FROM YOUR BRIDAL HOUR TO THE DAY WHICH SEES YOU BROUGHT AS LOW AS THESE, AND LAID IN SUCH A BED, THERE WILL BE NO APPEAL AGAINST HIM."

said Tom. "But I didn't mean to hurt him so much."

"Not so much!" she repeated, clenching her hand and stamping her foot, to Tom's great wonder. "Don't say that. It was brave of you. I honour you for it. If you should ever quarrel again, don't spare him for the world, but beat him down and set your shoe upon him. Not a word of this to anybody. Dear Mr. Pinch, I am your friend from to-night. I am always your friend from this time."

She turned her flushed face upon Tom to

confirm her words by its kindling expression; and seizing his right hand, pressed it to her breast, and kissed it. And there was nothing personal in this to render it at all embarrassing, for even Tom, whose power of observation was by no means remarkable, knew from the energy with which she did it that she would have fondled any hand, no matter how bedaubed or dyed, that had broken the head of Jonas Chuzzlewit.

Tom went into his room and went to bed, full of uncomfortable thoughts. That there

should be any such tremendous division in the family as he knew must have taken place to convert Charity Pecksniff into his friend, for any reason, but, above all, for that which was clearly the real one; that Jonas, who had assailed him with such exceeding coarseness, should have been sufficiently magnanimous to keep the secret of their quarrel; and that any train of circumstances should have led to the commission of an assault and battery by Thomas Pinch upon any man calling himself the friend of Seth Pecksniff; were matters of such deep and painful cogitation, that he could not close his eyes. His own violence, in particular, so preyed upon the generous mind of Tom, that coupling it with the many former occasions on which he had given Mr. Pecksniff pain and anxiety (occasions of which that gentleman often reminded him), he really began to regard himself as destined by a mysterious fate to be the evil genius and bad angel of his patron. But he fell asleep at last and dreamed—new source of waking uneasiness—that he had betrayed his trust, and run away with Mary Graham.

It must be acknowledged that, asleep or awake, Tom's position in reference to this young lady was full of uneasiness. The more he saw of her, the more he admired her beauty, her intelligence, the amiable qualities that even won on the divided house of Pecksniff, and in a few days restored at all events the semblance of harmony and kindness between the angry sisters. When she spoke, Tom held his breath, so eagerly he listened; when she sang, he sat like one entranced. She touched his organ, and from that bright epoch even it, the old companion of his happiest hours, incapable as he had thought of elevation, began a new and deified existence.

God's love upon thy patience, Tom! Who that had beheld thee, for three summer weeks, poring through half the dead-long night over the jingling anatomy of that inscrutable old harpsichord in the back parlour, could have missed the entrance to thy secret heart: albeit it was dimly known to thee? Who that had seen the glow upon thy cheek when leaning down to listen, after hours of labour, for the sound of one incorrigible note, thou foundest that it had a voice at last, and wheezed out a flat something distinctly akin to what it ought to be,—would not have known that it was destined for no common touch, but one that smote, though gently as an angel's hand, upon the deepest chord within thee! And if a friendly glance—ay, even though it were as guileless as thine own, Dear Tom—could but have pierced the twilight of

that evening, when, in a voice well tempered to the time, sad, sweet, and low, yet hopeful, she first sang to the altered instrument, and wondered at the change; and thou, sitting apart at the open window, kept a glad silence and a swelling heart—must not that glance have read perforce the dawning of a story, Tom, that it were well for thee had never been begun!

Tom Pinch's situation was not made the less dangerous or difficult, by the fact of no one word passing between them in reference to Martin. Honourably mindful of his promise, Tom gave her opportunities of all kinds. Early and late he was in the church; in her favourite walks; in the village, in the garden, in the meadows; and in any or all of these places he might have spoken freely. But no: at all such times she carefully avoided him, or never came in his way unaccompanied. It could not be that she disliked or distrusted him, for by a thousand little delicate means, too slight for any notice but his own, she singled him out when others were present, and showed herself the very soul of kindness. Could it be that she had broken with Martin, or had never returned his affection, save in his own bold and heightened fancy? Tom's cheek grew red with self-reproach, as he dismissed the thought.

All this time old Martin came and went in his own strange manner, or sat among the rest absorbed within himself, and holding little intercourse with any one. Although he was unsocial, he was not wilful in other things, or troublesome, or morose: being never better pleased than when they left him, quite unnoticed at his book, and pursued their own amusements in his presence, unreserved. It was impossible to discern in whom he took an interest, or whether he had an interest in any of them. Unless they spoke to him directly, he never showed that he had ears or eyes for anything that passed.

One day the lively Merry, sitting with downcast eyes under a shady tree in the churchyard, whither she had retired after fatiguing herself by the imposition of sundry trials on the temper of Mr. Jonas, felt that a new shadow came between her and the sun. Raising her eyes in the expectation of seeing her betrothed, she was not a little surprised to see old Martin instead. Her surprise was not diminished when he took his seat upon the turf beside her, and opened a conversation thus:—

"When are you to be married?"

"Oh! dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, my goodness me! I'm sure I don't know. Not yet awhile, I hope."

"You hope?" said the old man.

It was very gravely said, but she took it for banter, and giggled excessively.

"Come!" said the old man, with unusual kindness, "you are young, good-looking, and I think good-natured! Frivolous you are, and love to be, undoubtedly; but you must have some heart."

"I have not given it all away, I can tell you," said Merry, nodding her head shrewdly, and plucking up the grass.

"Have you parted with any of it?"

She threw the grass about, and looked another way, but said nothing.

Martin repeated his question.

"Lor, my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit! really you must excuse me! How very odd you are."

"If it be odd in me to desire to know whether you love the young man whom I understand you are to marry, I *am* very odd," said Martin. "For that is certainly my wish."

"He's such a monster, you know," said Merry, pouting.

"Then you don't love him?" returned the old man. "Is that your meaning?"

"Why, my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I'm sure I tell him a hundred times a day that I hate him. You must have heard me tell him that."

"Often," said Martin.

"And so I do," cried Merry. "I do positively."

"Being at the same time engaged to marry him," observed the old man.

"Oh yes," said Merry. "But I told the wretch—my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I told him when he asked me—that if I ever did marry him, it should only be that I might hate and tease him all my life."

She had a suspicion that the old man regarded Jonas with anything but favour, and intended these remarks to be extremely captivating. He did not appear, however, to regard them in that light by any means; for when he spoke again, it was in a tone of severity.

"Look about you," he said, pointing to the graves; "and remember that from your bridal hour to the day which sees you brought as low as these, and laid in such a bed, there will be no appeal against him. Think, and speak, and act, for once, like an accountable creature. Is any control put upon your inclinations? Are you forced into this match? Are you insidiously advised or tempted to contract it, by any one? I will not ask by whom: by any one?"

"No," said Merry, shrugging her shoulders. "I don't know that I am."

"Don't know that you are! Are you?"

"No," replied Merry. "Nobody ever said anything to me about it. If any one had tried

to make me have him, I wouldn't have had him at all."

"I am told that he was at first supposed to be your sister's admirer," said Martin.

"Oh, good gracious! My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, it would be very hard to make him, though he *is* a monster, accountable for other people's vanity," said Merry. "And poor dear Cherry is the vainest darling!"

"It was her mistake then?"

"I hope it was," cried Merry; "but, all along, the dear child has been so dreadfully jealous and *so* cross, that, upon my word and honour, it's impossible to please her, and it's of no use trying."

"Not forced, persuaded, or controlled," said Martin, thoughtfully. "And that's true, I see. There is one chance yet. You may have lapsed into this engagement in very giddiness. It may have been the wanton act of a light head. Is that so?"

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," simpered Merry, "as to light-headedness, there never was such a feather of a head as mine. It's a perfect balloon, I declare! You never *did*, you know!"

He waited quietly till she had finished, and then said, steadily and slowly, and in a softened voice, as if he would still invite her confidence:

"Have you any wish—or is there anything within your breast that whispers you may form the wish, if you have time to think—to be released from this engagement?"

Again Miss Merry pouted, and looked down, and plucked the grass, and shrugged her shoulders. No. She didn't know that she had. She was pretty sure she hadn't. Quite sure, she might say. She "didn't mind it."

"Has it ever occurred to you," said Martin, "that your married life may perhaps be miserable, full of bitterness, and most unhappy?"

Merry looked down again; and now she tore the grass up by the roots.

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, what shocking words! Of course, I shall quarrel with him; I should quarrel with any husband. Married people always quarrel, I believe. But as to being miserable, and bitter, and all those dreadful things, you know, why I couldn't be absolutely that, unless he always had the best of it; and I mean to have the best of it myself. I always do now," cried Merry, nodding her head, and giggling very much; "for I make a perfect slave of the creature."

"Let it go on," said Martin, rising. "Let it go on! I sought to know your mind, my dear, and you have shown it me. I wish you joy. Joy!" he repeated, looking full upon her, and

pointing to the wicket-gate where Jonas entered at the moment. And then, without waiting for his nephew, he passed out at another gate, and went away.

"Oh you terrible old man!" cried the facetious Merry to herself. "What a perfectly hideous monster to be wandering about churchyards in the broad daylight, frightening people out of their wits! Don't come here, Griffin, or I'll go away directly."

Mr. Jonas was the Griffin. He sat down upon the grass at her side, in spite of this warning, and sulkily inquired:

"What's my uncle been a talking about?"

"About you," rejoined Merry. "He says you're not half good enough for me."

"Oh yes, I dare say! We all know that. He means to give you some present worth having, I hope. Did he say anything that looked like it?"

"*That* he didn't!" cried Merry, most decisively.

"A stingy old dog he is," said Jonas. "Well?"

"Griffin!" cried Miss Mercy, in counterfeit amazement; "what are you doing, Griffin?"

"Only giving you a squeeze," said the discomfited Jonas. "There's no harm in that, I suppose?"

"But there is a great deal of harm in it, if I don't consider it agreeable," returned his cousin. "Do go along, will you? You make me so hot!"

Mr. Jonas withdrew his arm; and for a moment looked at her more like a murderer than a lover. But he cleared his brow by degrees, and broke silence with:

"I say, Mel!"

"What do you say, you vulgar thing—you low savage?" cried his fair betrothed.

"When is it to be? I can't afford to go on dawdling about here half my life, I needn't tell you, and Pecksniff says that father's being so lately dead makes very little odds; for we can be married as quiet as we please down here, and my being lonely is a good reason to the neighbours for taking a wife home so soon, especially one that he knew. As to crossbones (my uncle, I mean), he's sure not to put a spoke in the wheel, whatever we settle on, for he told Pecksniff only this morning, that if *you* liked it, he'd nothing at all to say. So, Mel," said Jonas, venturing on another squeeze; "when shall it be?"

"Upon my word!" cried Merry.

"Upon my soul, if you like," said Jonas. "What do you say to next week, now?"

"To next week! If you had said next quarter, I should have wondered at your impudence."

"But I didn't say next quarter," retorted Jonas. "I said next week."

"Then, Griffin," cried Miss Merry, pushing him off, and rising. "I say no! not next week. It shan't be till I choose—and I may not choose it to be for months. There!"

He glanced up at her from the ground, almost as darkly as he had looked at Tom Pinch; but held his peace.

"No fright of a Griffin with a patch over his eye, shall dictate to me, or have a voice in the matter," said Merry. "There!"

Still Mr. Jonas held his peace.

"If it's next month, that shall be the very earliest; but I won't say when it shall be till to-morrow; and if you don't like that, it shall never be at all," said Merry; "and if you follow me about and won't leave me alone, it shall never be at all. There! And if you don't do everything I order you to do, it shall never be at all. So don't follow me. There, Griffin!"

And with that, she skipped away, among the trees.

"Ecod, my lady!" said Jonas, looking after her, and biting a piece of straw, almost to powder; "you'll catch it for this, when you *are* married! It's all very well now—it keeps one on, somehow, and you know it—but I'll pay you off scot and lot by and bye. This is a plaguy dull sort of a place for a man to be sitting by himself in. I never could abide a mouldy old churchyard."

As he turned into the avenue himself, Miss Merry, who was far ahead, happened to look back.

"Ah!" said Jonas, with a sullen smile, and a nod that was not addressed to her; "make the most of it while it lasts. Get in your hay while the sun shines. Take your own way as long as it's in your power, my lady!"

CHAPTER XXV.

IS IN PART PROFESSIONAL; AND FURNISHES THE READER WITH SOME VALUABLE HINTS IN RELATION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF A SICK CHAMBER.

MR. MOULD was surrounded by his household gods. He was enjoying the sweets of domestic repose, and gazing on them with a calm delight. The day being sultry, and the window open, the legs of Mr. Mould were on the window-seat, and his back reclined against the shutter. Over his shining head a handkerchief was drawn, to guard his baldness

from the flies. The room was fragrant with the smell of punch, a tumbler of which grateful compound stood upon a small round table, convenient to the hand of Mr. Mould: so deftly mixed, that as his eye looked down into the cool transparent drink, another eye, peering brightly from behind the crisp lemon-peel, looked up at him, and twinkled like a star.

Deep in the city, and within the ward of Cheap, stood Mr. Mould's establishment. His Harem, or, in other words, the common sitting-room of Mrs. Mould and family, was at the back, over the little counting-house behind the shop: abutting on a churchyard, small and shady. In this domestic chamber Mr. Mould now sat; gazing, a placid man, upon his punch and home. If, for a moment at a time, he sought a wider prospect, whence he might return with freshened zest to these enjoyments, his moist glance wandered like a sunbeam through a rural screen of scarlet runners, trained on strings before the window; and he looked down, with an artist's eye, upon the graves.

The partner of his life, and daughters twain, were Mr. Mould's companions. Plump as any partridge was each Miss Mould, and Mrs. M. was plumper than the two together. So round and chubby were their fair proportions, that they might have been the bodies once belonging to the angels' faces in the shop below, grown up, with other heads attached to make them mortal. Even their peachy cheeks were puffed out and distended, as though they ought of right to be performing on celestial trumpets. The bodiless cherubs in the shops, who were depicted as constantly blowing those instruments for ever and ever without any lungs, played, it is to be presumed, entirely by ear.

Mr. Mould looked lovingly at Mrs. Mould, who sat hard by and was a helpmate to him in his punch as in all other things. Each seraph daughter, too, enjoyed her share of his regards, and smiled upon him in return. So bountiful were Mr. Mould's possessions, and so large his stock in trade, that even there, within his household sanctuary, stood a cumbrous press, whose mahogany maw was filled with shrouds, and winding-sheets, and other furniture of funerals. But, though the Misses Mould had been brought up, as one may say, beneath his eye, it had cast no shadow on their timid infancy or blooming youth. Sporting behind the scenes of death and burial from cradlehood, the Misses Mould knew better. Hat-bands, to them, were but so many yards of silk or crape: the final robe but such a quantity of linen. The Misses Mould could idealise a player's habit, or a court-lady's

petticoat, or even an act of parliament. But they were not to be taken in by palls. They made them sometimes.

The premises of Mr. Mould were hard of hearing to the boisterous noises in the great main streets, and nestled in a quiet corner, where the city strife became a drowsy hum, that sometimes rose and sometimes fell and sometimes altogether ceased: suggesting to a thoughtful mind a stoppage in Cheapside. The light came sparkling in among the scarlet runners, as if the churchyard winked at Mr. Mould, and said, "We understand each other;" and from the distant shop a pleasant sound arose of coffin-making with a low melodious hammer, rat, tat, tat, tat, alike promoting slumber and digestion.

"Quite the buzz of insects," said Mr. Mould, closing his eyes in a perfect luxury. "It puts one in mind of the sound of animated nature in the agricultural districts. It's exactly like the woodpecker tapping."

"The woodpecker tapping the hollow *elm* tree," observed Mrs. Mould, adapting the words of the popular melody to the description of wood commonly used in the trade.

"Ha ha!" laughed Mr. Mould. "Not at all bad, my dear. We shall be glad to hear from you again, Mrs. M. Hollow elm tree, eh? Ha ha! Very good indeed. I've seen worse than that in the Sunday papers, my love."

Mrs. Mould, thus encouraged, took a little more of the punch, and handed it to her daughters, who dutifully followed the example of their mother.

"Hollow *elm* tree, eh?" said Mr. Mould, making a slight motion with his legs in his enjoyment of the joke. "It's been in the song. Elm, eh? Yes, to be sure. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my soul, that's one of the best things I know!" He was so excessively tickled by the jest that he couldn't forget it, but repeated twenty times, "Elm, eh? Yes, to be sure. Elm, of course. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my life, you know, that ought to be sent to somebody who could make use of it. It's one of the smartest things that ever was said. Hollow *elm* tree, eh? Of course. Very hollow. Ha, ha, ha!"

Here a knock was heard at the room door.

"That's Tacker, I know," said Mrs. Mould, "by the wheezing he makes. Who that hears him now, would suppose he'd ever had wind enough to carry the feathers on his head! Come in, Tacker."

"Beg your pardon, ma'am," said Tacker, looking in a little way. "I thought our Governor was here."

"Well! so he is," cried Mould.

"Oh! I didn't see you, I'm sure," said Tacker, looking a little farther. "You wouldn't be inclined to take a walking one of two, with the plain wood and a tin plate, I suppose?"

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Mould, "much too common. Nothing to say to it."

"I told 'em it was precious low," observed Mr. Tacker.

"Tell 'em to go somewhere else. We don't do that style of business here," said Mr. Mould. "Like their impudence to propose it. Who is it?"

"Why," returned Tacker, pausing, "that's where it is, you see. It's the beadle's son-in-law."

"The beadle's son-in-law, eh?" said Mould. "Well! I'll do it if the beadle follows in his cocked hat; not else. We may carry it off that way, by looking official, but it'll be low enough, then. His cocked hat, mind!"

"I'll take care, sir," rejoined Tacker. "Oh! Mrs. Gamp's below, and wants to speak to you."

"Tell Mrs. Gamp to come up-stairs," said Mould. "Now, Mrs. Gamp, what's *your* news?"

The lady in question was by this time in the doorway, curtseying to Mrs. Mould. At the same moment, a peculiar fragrance was borne upon the breeze, as if a passing fairy had hicoughed, and had previously been to a wine-vaults.

Mrs. Gamp made no response to Mr. Mould, but curtseyed to Mrs. Mould again, and held up her hands and eyes, as in a devout thanksgiving that she looked so well. She was neatly, but not gaudily attired, in the weeds she had worn when Mr. Pecksniff had the pleasure of making her acquaintance; and was perhaps the turning of a scale more snuffy.

"There are some happy creeturs," Mrs. Gamp observed, "as time runs back'ards with, and you are one, Mrs. Mould; not that he need do nothing except use you in his most owdacious way for years to come, I'm sure; for young you are and will be. I says to Mrs. Harris," Mrs. Gamp continued, "only t'other day; the last Monday evening fortnight as ever dawned upon this Piljian's Projiss of a mortal wale; I says to Mrs. Harris when she says to me, 'Years and our trials, Mrs. Gamp, sets marks upon us all.'—'Say not the words, Mrs. Harris, if you and me is to be continual friends, for sech is not the case. Mrs. Mould,' I says, making so free, I will confess, as use the name," (she curtseyed here,) "'is one of them that goes agen the obser- vation straight; and never, Mrs. Harris, whilst I've a drop of breath to draw, will I set by, and not stand up, don't think it.'—'I ast your par-

don, ma'am,' says Mrs. Harris, 'and I humbly grant your grace; for if ever a woman lived as would see her feller creeturs into fits to serve her friends, well do I know that woman's name is Sairey Gamp.'

At this point she was fain to stop for breath; and advantage may be taken of the circumstance, to state that a fearful mystery surrounded this lady of the name of Harris, whom no one in the circle of Mrs. Gamp's acquaintance had ever seen; neither did any human being know her place of residence, though Mrs. Gamp appeared on her own showing to be in constant communication with her. There were conflicting rumours on the subject; but the prevalent opinion was that she was a phantom of Mrs. Gamp's brain—as Messrs. Doe and Roe are fictions of the law—created for the express purpose of holding visionary dialogues with her on all manner of subjects, and invariably winding up with a compliment to the excellence of her nature.

"And likewise what a pleasure," said Mrs. Gamp, turning with a tearful smile towards the daughters, "to see them two young ladies as I know'd afore a tooth in their pretty heads was cut, and have many a day seen—ah, the sweet creeturs!—playing at berryins down in the shop, and follerin' the order-book to its long home in the iron safe! But that's all past and over, Mr. Mould;" as she thus got in a carefully regulated routine to that gentleman, she shook her head waggishly; "That's all past and over now, sir, an't it?"

"Changes, Mrs. Gamp, changes!" returned the undertaker.

"More changes too, to come, afore we've done with changes, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, nodding yet more waggishly than before. "Young ladies with such faces thinks of something else besides berryins, don't they, sir?"

"I am sure I don't know, Mrs. Gamp," said Mould with a chuckle.—"Not bad in Mrs. Gamp, my dear?"

"Oh yes, you do know, sir!" said Mrs. Gamp, "and so does Mrs. Mould, your ansome pardner too, sir; and so do I, although the blessing of a daughter was deniged me; which, if we had had one, Gamp would certainly have drunk its little shoes right off its feet, as with our precious boy he did, and arterwards send the child a errand to sell his wooden leg for any money it would fetch as matches in the rough, and bring it home in liquor: which was truly done beyond his years, for ev'ry individgle penny that child lost at toss or buy for kidney ones; and come home arterwards quite bold, to break the news, and offering to drown himself if sech

would be a satisfaction to his parents.—Oh yes, you do know, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, wiping her eye with her shawl, and resuming the thread of her discourse. "There's something besides births and berryins in the newspapers, an't there, Mr. Mould?"

Mr. Mould winked at Mrs. Mould, whom he had by this time taken on his knee, and said: "No doubt. A good deal more, Mrs. Gamp. Upon my life, Mrs. Gamp is very far from bad, my dear!"

"There's marryings, an't there, sir?" said Mrs. Gamp, while both the daughters blushed and tittered. "Bless their precious hearts, and well they knows it! Well you know'd it too, and well did Mrs. Mould, when you was at their time of life! But my opinion is, you're all of one age now. For as to you and Mrs. Mould, sir, ever having grand-children—"

"Oh! Fie, fie! Nonsense, Mrs. Gamp," replied the undertaker. "Devilish smart, though. Ca-pi-tal!"—this was in a whisper. "My dear—" aloud again—"Mrs. Gamp can drink a glass of rum I dare say. Sit down, Mrs. Gamp, sit down."

Mrs. Gamp took the chair that was nearest the door, and casting up her eyes towards the ceiling, feigned to be wholly insensible to the fact of a glass of rum being in preparation, until it was placed in her hand by one of the young ladies, when she exhibited the greatest surprise.

"A thing," she said, "as hardly ever, Mrs. Mould, occurs with me unless it is when I am indisposed, and find my half a pint of porter settling heavy on the chest. Mrs. Harris often and often says to me, 'Sairey Gamp,' she says, 'you raly do amaze me!' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'why so? Give it a name, I beg.' 'Telling the truth then, ma'am,' says Mrs. Harris, 'and shaming him as shall be nameless betwixt you and me, never did I think till I know'd you, as any woman could sick-nurse and monthly likeways, on the little that you takes to drink.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'none on us knows what we can do till we tries; and wunst, when me and Gamp kept ouse, I thought so too. But now,' I says, 'my half a pint of porter fully satisfies; perwisin', Mrs. Harris, that it is brought reg'lar, and draw'd mild. Whether I sicks or monthlies, ma'am, I hope I does my duty, but I am but a poor woman, and I earns my living hard; therefore I *do* require it, which I makes confession, to be brought reg'lar and draw'd mild.'"

The precise connection between these observations and the glass of rum, did not appear;

for Mrs. Gamp proposing as a toast "The best of lucks to all!" took off the dram in quite a scientific manner, without any further remarks.

"And what's your news, Mrs. Gamp?" asked Mould again, as that lady wiped her lips upon her shawl, and nibbled a corner off a soft biscuit, which she appeared to carry in her pocket as a provision against contingent drams. "How's Mr. Chuffey?"

"Mr. Chuffey, sir," she replied, "is jest as usual; he an't no better and he an't no worse. I take it very kind in the gentleman to have wrote up to you and said, 'let Mrs. Gamp take care of him till I come home;' but ev'ry think he does is kind. There an't a many like him. If there was, we shouldn't want no churches."

"What do you want to speak to me about, Mrs. Gamp?" said Mould, coming to the point.

"Jest this, sir," Mrs. Gamp returned, "with thanks to you for asking. There *is* a gent, sir, at the Bull in Holborn, as has been took ill there, and is bad abed. They have a day nurse as was recommended from Bartholomew's; and well I knows her, Mr. Mould, her name bein' Mrs. Prig, the best of creeturs. But she is otherways engaged at night, and they are in wants of night-watching; consequent she says to them, having reposed the greatest friendliness in me for twenty year, 'The soberest person going, and the best of blessings in a sick room, is Mrs. Gamp. Send a boy to Kingsgate-street,' she says, 'and snap her up at any price, for Mrs. Gamp is worth her weight and more in goldian guineas.' My landlord brings the message down to me, and says, 'bein' in a light place where you are, and this job promising so well, why not unite the two?' 'No, sir,' I says, 'not unbeknown to Mr. Mould, and therefore do not think it. But I will go to Mr. Mould,' I says, 'and ast him, if you like.' Here she looked sideways at the undertaker, and came to a stop.

"Night-watching, eh?" said Mould, rubbing his chin.

"From eight o'clock till eight, sir: I will not deceive you," Mrs. Gamp rejoined.

"And then go back, eh?" said Mould.

"Quite free then, sir, to attend to Mr. Chuffey. His ways bein' quiet, and his hours early, he'd be abed, sir, nearly all the time. I will not deny," said Mrs. Gamp with meekness, "that I am but a poor woman, and that the money is a object, but do not let that act upon you, Mr. Mould. Rich folks may ride on camels, but it an't so easy for 'em to see out of a needle's eye. That is my comfort, and I hope I knows it."

"Well, Mrs. Gamp," observed Mould, "I

don't see any particular objection to your earning an honest penny under such circumstances. I should keep it quiet, I think, Mrs. Gamp. I wouldn't mention it to Mr. Chuzzlewit on his return, for instance, unless it were necessary, or he asked you point-blank."

"The very words was on my lips, sir," Mrs. Gamp rejoined. "Supposing that the gent should die, I hope I might take the liberty of saying as I know'd some one in the undertaking line, and yet give no offence to you, sir?"

"Certainly, Mrs. Gamp," said Mould, with much condescension. "You may casually remark, in such a case, that we do the thing pleasantly and in a great variety of styles, and are generally considered to make it as agreeable as possible to the feelings of the survivors. But don't obtrude it—don't obtrude it. Easy, easy! My dear, you may as well give Mrs. Gamp a card or two, if you please."

Mrs. Gamp received them, and scenting no more rum in the wind (for the bottle was locked up again) rose to take her departure.

"Wishing ev'ry happiness to this happy family," said Mrs. Gamp, "with all my heart. Good artemoon, Mrs. Mould! If I was Mr. Mould, I should be jealous of you, ma'am; and I'm sure if I was you, I should be jealous of Mr. Mould."

"Tut, tut! Bah, bah! Go along, Mrs. Gamp!" cried the delighted undertaker.

"As to the young ladies," said Mrs. Gamp, dropping a curtsey, "bless their sweet looks—how they can ever reconsize it with their duties to be so grown up with such young parents, it an't for sech as me to give a guess at."

"Nonsense, nonsense. Be off, Mrs. Gamp!" cried Mould. But in the height of his gratification, he actually pinched Mrs. Mould, as he said it.

"I'll tell you what, my dear," he observed, when Mrs. Gamp had at last withdrawn, and shut the door, "that's a ve-ry shrewd woman. That's a woman whose intellect is immensely superior to her station in life. That's a woman who observes and reflects in an uncommon manner. She's the sort of woman now," said Mould, drawing his silk handkerchief over his head again, and composing himself for a nap, "one would almost feel disposed to bury for nothing, and do it neatly, too!"

Mrs. Mould and her daughters fully concurred in these remarks; the subject of which had by this time reached the street, where she experienced so much inconvenience from the air, that she was obliged to stand under an archway for a short time, to recover herself. Even after

this precaution, she walked so unsteadily as to attract the compassionate regards of divers kind-hearted boys, who took the liveliest interest in her disorder; and in their simple language, bade her be of good cheer, for she was "only a little screwed."

Whatever she was, or whatever name the vocabulary of medical science would have bestowed upon her malady, Mrs. Gamp was perfectly acquainted with the way home again; and arriving at the house of Anthony Chuzzlewit & Son, lay down to rest. Remaining there until seven o'clock in the evening, and then persuading poor old Chuffey to betake himself to bed, she sallied forth upon her new engagement. First, she went to her private lodgings in Kingsgate-street, for a bundle of robes and wrappings comfortable in the night season; and then repaired to the Bull in Holborn, which she reached as the clocks were striking eight.

As she turned into the yard, she stopped; for the landlord, landlady, and head chambermaid, were all on the threshold together, talking earnestly with a young gentleman who seemed to have just come or to be just going away. The first words that struck upon Mrs. Gamp's ear obviously bore reference to the patient; and it being expedient that all good attendants should know as much as possible about the case on which their skill is brought to bear, Mrs. Gamp listened as a matter of duty.

"No better, then?" observed the gentleman.

"Worse!" said the landlord.

"Much worse," added the landlady.

"Oh! a deal badder," cried the chambermaid from the background, opening her eyes very wide, and shaking her head.

"Poor fellow!" said the gentleman, "I am sorry to hear it. The worst of it is, that I have no idea what friends or relations he has, or where they live, except that it certainly is not in London."

The landlord looked at the landlady; the landlady looked at the landlord; and the chambermaid remarked, hysterically, "that of all the many vague directions she had ever seen or heard of (and they wasn't few in an hotel), *that* was the waggiest."

"The fact is, you see," pursued the gentleman, "as I told you yesterday when you sent to me, I really know very little about him. We were schoolfellows together; but since that time I have only met him twice. On both occasions I was in London for a boy's holiday (having come up for a week or so from Wiltshire), and lost sight of him again, directly. The letter bearing my name and address which you found upon his

table, and which led to your applying to me, is in answer, you will observe, to one he wrote from this house the very day he was taken ill, making an appointment with him at his own request. Here is his letter, if you wish to see it."

The landlord read it: the landlady looked over him. The chambermaid, in the background, made out as much of it as she could, and invented the rest; believing it all from that time forth as a positive piece of evidence.

"He has very little luggage, you say?" observed the gentleman, who was no other than our old friend, John Westlock.

"Nothing but a portmanteau," said the landlord; "and very little in it."

"A few pounds in his purse, though?"

"Yes. It's sealed up, and in the cash-box. I made a memorandum of the amount, which you're welcome to see."

"Well!" said John, "as the medical gentleman says the fever must take its course, and



"WHETHER I SICKS OR MONTHLIES, MA'AM, . . . I DO REQUIRE IT, WHICH I MAKES CONFESSION, TO BE BROUGHT REG'LAR AND DRAW'D MILD."

nothing can be done just now beyond giving him his drinks regularly and having him carefully attended to, nothing more can be said that I know of, until he is in a condition to give us some information. Can you suggest anything else?"

"N-no," replied the landlord, "except—"

"Except, who's to pay, I suppose?" said John.

"Why," hesitated the landlord, "it would be as well."

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"Quite as well," said the landlady.

"Not forgetting to remember the servants," said the chambermaid in a bland whisper.

"It is but reasonable, I fully admit," said John Westlock. "At all events, you have the stock in hand to go upon for the present; and I will readily undertake to pay the doctor and the nurses."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "A royal gentleman!"

She groaned her admiration so audibly, that

they all turned round. Mrs. Gamp felt the necessity of advancing, bundle in hand, and introducing herself.

"The night-nurse," she observed, "from Kingsgate-street, well bekknown to Mrs. Prig the day-nurse, and the best of creeturs. How is the poor dear gentleman, to-night? If he an't no better yet, still that is what must be expected and prepared for. It an't the fust time by a many score, ma'am," dropping a curtesy to the landlady, "that Mrs. Prig and me has nussed together, turn and turn about, one off, one on. We knows each other's ways, and often gives relief when others fail. Our charges is but low, sir"—Mrs. Gamp addressed herself to John on this head—"considerin' the nater of our painful dooty. If they wos made accordin' to our wishes, they would be easy paid."

Regarding herself as having now delivered her inauguration address, Mrs. Gamp curtsied all round, and signified her wish to be conducted to the scene of her official duties. The chambermaid led her, through a variety of intricate passages, to the top of the house; and pointing at length to a solitary door at the end of a gallery, informed her that yonder was the chamber where the patient lay. That done, she hurried off with all the speed she could make.

Mrs. Gamp traversed the gallery in a great heat from having carried her large bundle up so many stairs, and tapped at the door, which was immediately opened by Mrs. Prig, bonneted and shawled and all impatience to be gone. Mrs. Prig was of the Gamp build, but not so fat; and her voice was deeper and more like a man's. She had also a beard.

"I began to think you warn't a coming!" Mrs. Prig observed, in some displeasure.

"It shall be made good to-morrow night," said Mrs. Gamp, "honorable. I had to go and fetch my things." She had begun to make signs of inquiry in reference to the position of the patient and his overhearing them—for there was a screen before the door—when Mrs. Prig settled that point easily.

"Oh!" she said aloud, "he's quiet, but his wits is gone. It an't no matter what you say."

"Anythin' to tell afore you goes, my dear?" asked Mrs. Gamp, setting her bundle down inside the door, and looking affectionately at her partner.

"The pickled salmon," Mrs. Prig replied, "is quite delicious. I can partick'ler recommend it. Don't have nothink to say to the cold meat, for it tastes of the stable. The drinks is all good."

Mrs. Gamp expressed herself much gratified.

"The physic and them things is on the drawers and mankleshelf," said Mrs. Prig cursorily. "He took his last slime draught at seven. The easy-chair an't soft enough. You'll want his piller."

Mrs. Gamp thanked her for these hints, and giving her a friendly good night, held the door open until she had disappeared at the other end of the gallery. Having thus performed the hospitable duty of seeing her safely off, she shut it, locked it on the inside, took up her bundle, walked round the screen, and entered on her occupation of the sick chamber.

"A little dull, but not so bad as might be," Mrs. Gamp remarked. "I'm glad to see a parapidge, in case of fire, and lots of roofs and chimney-pots to walk upon."

It will be seen from these remarks that Mrs. Gamp was looking out of window. When she had exhausted the prospect, she tried the easy-chair, which she indignantly declared was "harder than a brickbidge." Next, she pursued her researches among the physic-bottles, glasses, jugs, and tea-cups; and when she had entirely satisfied her curiosity on all these subjects of investigation, she untied her bonnet-strings and strolled up to the bedside to take a look at the patient.

A young man—dark and not ill-looking—with long black hair, that seemed the blacker for the whiteness of the bed-clothes. His eyes were partly open, and he never ceased to roll his head from side to side upon the pillow, keeping his body almost quiet. He did not utter words; but every now and then gave vent to an expression of impatience or fatigue, sometimes of surprise; and still his restless head—oh, weary, weary hour!—went to and fro without a moment's intermission.

Mrs. Gamp solaced herself with a pinch of snuff, and stood looking at him with her head inclined a little sideways, as a connoisseur might gaze upon a doubtful work of art. By degrees, a horrible remembrance of one branch of her calling took possession of the woman; and stooping down, she pinned his wandering arms against his sides, to see how he would look if laid out as a dead man. Her fingers itched to compose his limbs in that last marble attitude.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gamp, walking away from the bed, "he'd make a lovely corpse!"

She now proceeded to unpack her bundle; lighted a candle with the aid of a fire-box on the drawers; filled a small kettle, as a preliminary to refreshing herself with a cup of tea in the course of the night; laid what she called "a little bit of fire," for the same philanthropic pur-

pose; and also set forth a small tea-board, that nothing might be wanting for her comfortable enjoyment. These preparations occupied so long, that when they were brought to a conclusion it was high time to think about supper; so she rang the bell and ordered it.

"I think, young woman," said Mrs. Gamp to the assistant chambermaid, in a tone expressive of weakness, "that I could pick a little bit of pickled salmon, with a nice little sprig of fennel, and a sprinkling of white pepper. I takes new bread, my dear, with just a little pat of fresh butter, and a mossel of cheese. In case there should be such a thing as a cowcumber in the 'ouse, will you be so kind as to bring it, for I'm rather partial to 'em, and they does a world of good in a sick room. If they draws the Brighton Tipper here, I takes *that* ale at night, my love; it being considered wakeful by the doctors. And whatever you do, young woman, don't bring more than a shilling's worth of gin and water warm when I rings the bell a second time: for that is always my allowance, and I never takes a drop beyond!"

Having preferred these moderate requests, Mrs. Gamp observed that she would stand at the door until the order was executed, to the end that the patient might not be disturbed by her opening it a second time; and therefore she would thank the young woman to "look sharp."

A tray was brought with everything upon it, even to the cucumber; and Mrs. Gamp accordingly sat down to eat and drink in high good humour. The extent to which she availed herself of the vinegar, and supped up that refreshing fluid with the blade of her knife, can scarcely be expressed in narrative.

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Gamp, as she meditated over the warm shilling's-worth, "what a blessed thing it is—living in a wale—to be contented! What a blessed thing it is to make sick people happy in their beds, and never mind one's self as long as one can do a service! I don't believe a finer cowcumber was ever grow'd. I'm sure I never see one!"

She moralised in the same vein until her glass was empty, and then administered the patient's medicine, by the simple process of clutching his windpipe to make him gasp, and immediately pouring it down his throat.

"I a'most forgot the piller, I declare!" said Mrs. Gamp, drawing it away. "There! Now he's comfortable as he can be, I'm sure! I must try to make myself as much so as I can."

With this view, she went about the construction of an extemporaneous bed in the easy-chair,

with the addition of the next easy one for her feet. Having formed the best couch that the circumstances admitted of, she took out of her bundle a yellow nightcap, of prodigious size, in shape resembling a cabbage; which article of dress she fixed and tied on with the utmost care, previously divesting herself of a row of bald old curls that could scarcely be called false, they were so very innocent of anything approaching to deception. From the same repository she brought forth a night-jacket, in which she also attired herself. Finally, she produced a watchman's coat, which she tied round her neck by the sleeves, so that she became two people; and looked, behind, as if she were in the act of being embraced by one of the old patrol.

All these arrangements made, she lighted the rushlight, coiled herself up on her couch, and went to sleep. Ghostly and dark the room became, and full of lowering shadows. The distant noises in the streets were gradually hushed; the house was quiet as a sepulchre; the dead of night was confined in the silent city.

Oh, weary, weary hour! Oh, haggard mind, groping darkly through the past; incapable of detaching itself from the miserable present; dragging its heavy chain of care through imaginary feasts and revels, and scenes of awful pomp; seeking but a moment's rest among the long-forgotten haunts of childhood, and the resorts of yesterday; and dimly finding fear and horror everywhere! Oh, weary, weary hour. What were the wanderings of Cain, to these!

Still, without a moment's interval, the burning head tossed to and fro. Still, from time to time, fatigue, impatience, suffering, and surprise, found utterance upon that rack, and plainly too, though never once in words. At length, in the solemn hour of midnight, he began to talk; waiting awfully for answers sometimes; as though invisible companions were about his bed; and so replying to their speech and questioning again.

Mrs. Gamp awoke, and sat up in her bed: presenting on the wall the shadow of a gigantic night constable, struggling with a prisoner.

"Come! Hold your tongue!" she cried, in sharp reproof. "Don't make none of that noise here."

There was no alteration in the face, or in the incessant motion of the head, but he talked on wildly.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gamp, coming out of the chair with an impatient shiver; "I thought I was a sleepin' too pleasant to last! The devil's in the night, I think, it's turned so chilly."

"Don't drink so much!" cried the sick man. "You'll ruin us all. Don't you see how the

fountain sinks? Look at the mark where the sparkling water was just now!"

"Sparkling water indeed!" said Mrs. Gamp. "I'll have a sparkling cup o' tea, I think. I wish you'd hold your noise!"

He burst into a laugh, which, being prolonged, fell off into a dismal wail. Checking himself, with fierce inconstancy he began to count—fast.

"One—two—three—four—five—six."

"One, two, buckle my shoe," said Mrs. Gamp, who was now on her knees, lighting the fire, "'three, four, shut the door,'—I wish you'd shut your mouth, young man—'five, six, picking up sticks.' If I'd got a few handy, I should have the kettle biling all the sooner."

Awaiting this desirable consummation, she sat down so close to the fender (which was a high one) that her nose rested upon it; and for some time she drowsily amused herself by sliding that feature backwards and forwards along the brass top, as far as she could, without changing her position to do it. She maintained, all the while, a running commentary upon the wanderings of the man in bed.

"That makes five hundred and twenty-one men, all dressed alike, and with the same distortion on their faces, that have passed in at the window, and out at the door," he cried, anxiously. "Look there! Five hundred and twenty-two—twenty-three—twenty-four. Do you see them?"

"Ah! I see 'em," said Mrs. Gamp; "all the whole kit of 'em numbered like hackney-coaches—'an't they?"

"Touch me! Let me be sure of this. Touch me!"

"You'll take your next draught when I've made the kettle bile," retorted Mrs. Gamp, composedly, "and you'll be touched then. You'll be touched up, too, if you don't take it quiet."

"Five hundred and twenty-eight, five hundred and twenty-nine, five hundred and thirty.—Look here!"

"What's the matter now?" said Mrs. Gamp.

"They're coming four abreast, each man with his arm entwined in the next man's, and his hand upon his shoulder. What's that upon the arm of every man, and on the flag?"

"Spiders, p'rays," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Crape! Black crape! Good God! why do they wear it outside?"

"Would you have 'em carry black crape in their insides?" Mrs. Gamp retorted. "Hold your noise, hold your noise."

The fire beginning by this time to impart a grateful warmth, Mrs. Gamp became silent; gradually rubbed her nose more and more slowly along the top of the fender; and fell into a

heavy doze. She was awakened by the room ringing (as she fancied) with a name she knew:

"Chuzzlewit!"

The sound was so distinct and real, and so full of agonised entreaty, that Mrs. Gamp jumped up in terror, and ran to the door. She expected to find the passage filled with people, come to tell her that the house in the city had taken fire. But the place was empty: not a soul was there. She opened the window, and looked out. Dark, dull, dingy, and desolate house-tops. As she passed to her seat again, she glanced at the patient. Just the same; but silent. Mrs. Gamp was so warm now, that she threw off the watchman's coat, and fanned herself.

"It seemed to make the wery bottles ring," she said. "What could I have been a-dreaming of? That dratted Chuffey, I'll be bound."

The supposition was probable enough. At any rate, a pinch of snuff, and the song of the steaming kettle, quite restored the tone of Mrs. Gamp's nerves, which were none of the weakest. She brewed her tea; made some buttered toast; and sat down at the tea-board, with her face to the fire.

When once again, in a tone more terrible than that which had vibrated in her slumbering ear, these words were shrieked out:

"Chuzzlewit! Jonas! No!"

Mrs. Gamp dropped the cup she was in the act of raising to her lips, and turned round with a start that made the little tea-board leap. The cry had come from the bed.

It was bright morning the next time Mrs. Gamp looked out of window, and the sun was rising cheerfully. Lighter and lighter grew the sky, and noisier the streets; and high into the summer air uprose the smoke of newly kindled fires, until the busy day was broad awake.

Mrs. Prig relieved punctually, having passed a good night at her other patient's. Mr. Westlock came at the same time, but he was not admitted, the disorder being infectious. The doctor came too. The doctor shook his head. It was all he could do, under the circumstances, and he did it well.

"What sort of a night, nurse?"

"Restless, sir," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Talk much?"

"Middling, sir," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Nothing to the purpose, I suppose."

"Oh bless you no, sir. Only jargon."

"Well!" said the doctor, "we must keep him quiet; keep the room cool; give him his draughts regularly; and see that he's carefully looked to. That's all!"

"And as long as Mrs. Prig and me waits upon him, sir, no fear of that," said Mrs. Gamp.

"I suppose," observed Mrs. Prig, when they had curtseyed the doctor out: "there's nothin' new?"

"Nothin' at all, my dear," said Mrs. Gamp. "He's rather wearin' in his talk from making us a lot of names; elseways you needn't mind him."

"Oh, I sha'n't mind him," Mrs. Prig returned. "I have somethin' else to think of."

"I pays my debts to-night, you know, my dear, and comes afore my time," said Mrs. Gamp. "But Betsey Prig"—speaking with great feeling, and laying her hand upon her arm—"try the cowcubers, God bless you!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING, AND A PROMISING PROSPECT.

THE laws of sympathy between beards and birds, and the secret source of that attraction which frequently impels a shaver of the one to be a dealer in the other, are questions for the subtle reasoning of scientific bodies: not the less so, because their investigation would seem calculated to lead to no particular result. It is enough to know that the artist who had the honour of entertaining Mrs. Gamp as his first-floor lodger, united the two pursuits of barbering and bird-fancying; and that it was not an original idea of his, but one in which he had, dispersed about the bye-streets and suburbs of the town, a host of rivals.

The name of this householder was Paul Sweedlepipe. But he was commonly called Poll Sweedlepipe; and was not uncommonly believed to have been so christened, among his friends and neighbours.

With the exception of the staircase, and his lodger's private apartment, Poll Sweedlepipe's house was one great bird's nest. Game-cocks resided in the kitchen; pheasants wasted the brightness of their golden plumage on the garret; bantams roosted in the cellar; owls had possession of the bed-room; and specimens of all the smaller fry of birds chirruped and twittered in the shop. The staircase was sacred to rabbits. There in hutches of all shapes and kinds, made from old packing-cases, boxes, drawers, and tea-chests, they increased in a prodigious degree, and contributed their share towards that

complicated whiff which, quite impartially, and without distinction of persons, saluted every nose that was put into Sweedlepipe's easy shaving-shop.

Many noses found their way there, for all that, especially on a Sunday morning, before church-time. Even archbishops shave, or must be shaved, on a Sunday, and beards *will* grow after twelve o'clock on Saturday night, though it be upon the chins of base mechanics; who, not being able to engage their valets by the quarter, hire them by the job, and pay them—oh, the wickedness of copper coin!—in dirty pence. Poll Sweedlepipe, the sinner, shaved all comers at a penny each, and cut the hair of any customer for twopenny; and being a lone unmarried man, and having some connection in the bird line, Poll got on tolerably well.

He was a little elderly man, with a clammy cold right hand, from which even rabbits and birds could not remove the smell of shaving-soap. Poll had something of the bird in his nature; not of the hawk or eagle, but of the sparrow, that builds in chimney stacks, and inclines to human company. He was not quarrelsome though, like the sparrow; but peaceful, like the dove. In his walk he strutted; and, in this respect, he bore a faint resemblance to the pigeon, as well as in a certain prosiness of speech, which might, in its monotony, be likened to the cooing of that bird. He was very inquisitive; and when he stood at his shop-door in the evening-tide, watching the neighbours, with his head on one side, and his eye cocked knowingly, there was a dash of the raven in him. Yet, there was no more wickedness in Poll than in a Robin. Happily, too, when any of his ornithological properties were on the verge of going too far, they were quenched, dissolved, melted down, and neutralised in the barber; just as his bald-head—otherwise, as the head of a shaved magpie—lost itself in a wig of curly black ringlets, parted on one side, and cut away almost to the crown, to indicate immense capacity of intellect.

Poll had a very small, shrill, treble voice, which might have led the wags of Kingsgate Street to insist the more upon his feminine designation. He had a tender heart, too; for, when he had a good commission to provide three or four score sparrows for a shooting-match, he would observe, in a compassionate tone, how singular it was that sparrows should have been made expressly for such purposes. The question, whether men were made to shoot them, never entered into Poll's philosophy.

Poll wore, in his sporting character, a vel-

veteen coat, a great deal of blue stocking, ankle boots, a neckerchief of some bright colour, and a very tall hat. Pursuing his more quiet occupation of barber, he generally subsided into an apron not over-clean, a flannel jacket, and corduroy knee-shorts. It was in this latter costume, but with his apron girded round his waist, as a token of his having shut up shop for the night, that he closed the door one evening, some weeks after the occurrences detailed in the last chapter, and stood upon the steps in Kingsgate Street, listening until the little cracked bell within should leave off ringing. For, until it did—this was Mr. Sweedlepipe's reflection—the place never seemed quiet enough to be left to itself.

"It's the greediest little bell to ring," said Poll, "that ever was. But it's quiet at last."

He rolled his apron up a little tighter as he said these words, and hastened down the street. Just as he was turning into Holborn, he ran against a young gentleman in a livery. This youth was bold, though small, and, with several lively expressions of displeasure, turned upon him instantly.

"Now, Stoo-rid!" cried the young gentleman. "Can't you look where you're a going to—eh? Can't you mind where you're a coming to—eh? What do you think your eyes was made for—eh? Ah! Yes. Oh! Now then!"

The young gentleman pronounced the two last words in a very loud tone and with frightful emphasis, as though they contained within themselves the essence of the direst aggravation. But he had scarcely done so, when his anger yielded to surprise, and he cried, in a milder tone:

"What! Polly!"

"Why it an't you, sure!" cried Poll. "It can't be you!"

"No. It an't me," returned the youth. "It's my son: my oldest one. He's a credit to his father; an't he, Polly?" With this delicate little piece of banter, he halted on the pavement, and went round and round in circles, for the better exhibition of his figure: rather to the inconvenience of the passengers generally, who were not in an equal state of spirits with himself.

"I wouldn't have believed it," said Poll. "What! You've left your old place, then? Have you?"

"Have I!" returned his young friend, who had by this time stuck his hands into the pockets of his white cord breeches, and was swaggering along at the barber's side. "D'ye know a pair of top-boots when you see 'em, Polly?—look here!"

"Beau-ti-ful!" cried Mr. Sweedlepipe.

"D'ye know a slap-up sort of button, when

you see it?" said the youth. "Don't look at mine, if you an't a judge, because these lions' heads was made for men of taste: not snobs."

"Beau-ti-ful!" cried the barber again. "A grass-green frock-coat, too, bound with gold! and a cockade in your hat."

"I should hope so," replied the youth. "Blow the cockade, though; for, except that it don't turn round, it's like the wentilator that used to be in the kitchen winder at Todgers's. You ain't seen the old lady's name in the Gazette, have you?"

"No," returned the barber. "Is she a bankrupt?"

"If she ain't she will be," retorted Bailey. "That bis'nness never can be carried on without *me*. Well! How are you?"

"Oh! I'm pretty well," said Poll. "Are you living at this end of the town, or were you coming to see me? Was that the bis'nness that brought you to Holborn?"

"I haven't got no bis'nness in Holborn," returned Bailey, with some displeasure. "All my bis'nness lays at the West End. I've got the right sort of governor now. You can't see his face for his whiskers, and can't see his whiskers for the dye upon 'em. That's a gentleman, ain't it? You wouldn't like a ride in a cab, would you? Why, it wouldn't be safe to offer it. You'd faint away, only to see me a comin' at a mild trot round the corner."

To convey a slight idea of the effect of this approach, Mr. Bailey counterfeited in his own person the action of a high-trotting horse, and threw up his head so high, in backing against a pump, that he shook his hat off.

"Why, he's own uncle to Capricorn," said Bailey, "and brother to Cauliflower. He's been through the windows of two chaney shops since we've had him, and was sold for killin' his missis. That's a horse, I hope?"

"Ah! you'll never want to buy any more red-polls, now," observed Poll, looking on his young friend with an air of melancholy. "You'll never want to buy any more red-polls now, to hang up over the sink, will you?"

"I should think not," replied Bailey. "Reether so. I wouldn't have nothin' to say to any bird below a peacock, and *he'd* be vulgar. Well, how are you?"

"Oh! I'm pretty well," said Poll. He answered the question again because Mr. Bailey asked it again; Mr. Bailey asked it again, because, accompanied with a straddling action of the white cords, a bend of the knees, and a striking-forth of the top-boots—it was an easy, horse-fleshy, turfy sort of thing to do.

"Wot are you up to, old feller?" asked Mr. Bailey, with the same graceful rakishness. He was quite the man-about-town of the conversation, while the easy-shaver was the child.

"Why, I am going to fetch my lodger home," said Paul.

"A woman!" cried Mr. Bailey, "for a twenty-pun' note!"

The little barber hastened to explain that she was neither a young woman, nor a handsome woman, but a nurse, who had been acting as a kind of housekeeper to a gentleman for some weeks past, and left her place that night, in consequence of being superseded by another and a more legitimate housekeeper: to wit, the gentleman's bride.

"He's newly married, and he brings his young wife home to-night," said the barber. "So I'm going to fetch my lodger away—Mr. Chuzzlewit's, close behind the Post-office—and carry her box for her."

"Jonas Chuzzlewit's?" said Bailey.

"Ah!" returned Paul: "that's the name, sure enough. Do you know him?"

"Oh, no!" cried Mr. Bailey; "not at all. And I don't know her? Not neither? Why, they first kept company through me, a'most."

"Ah?" said Paul.

"Ah!" said Mr. Bailey, with a wink; "and she ain't bad-looking, mind you. But her sister was the best. *She* was the merry one. I often used to have a bit of fun with her, in the hold times!"

Mr. Bailey spoke as if he already had a leg and three-quarters in the grave, and this had happened twenty or thirty years ago. Paul Sweedlepipe, the meek, was so perfectly confounded by his precocious self-possession, and his patronising manner, as well as by his boots, cockade, and livery, that a mist swam before his eyes, and he saw—not the Bailey of acknowledged juvenility, from Todgers's Commercial Boarding House, who had made his acquaintance within a twelvemonth, by purchasing, at sundry times, small birds at twopence each—but a highly condensed embodiment of all the sporting grooms in London; an abstract of all the stable-knowledge of the time; a something at a high-pressure that must have had existence many years, and was fraught with terrible experiences. And truly, though in the cloudy atmosphere of Todgers's Mr. Bailey's genius had ever shone out brightly in this particular respect, it now eclipsed both time and space, cheated beholders of their senses, and worked on their belief in defiance of all natural laws. He walked along the tangible and real stones of Holborn-hill, an under-sized

boy; and yet he winked the winks, and thought the thoughts, and did the deeds, and said the sayings, of an ancient man. There was an old principle within him, and a young surface without. He became an inexplicable creature: a breeched and booted Sphinx. There was no course open to the barber but to go distracted himself, or to take Bailey for granted: and he wisely chose the latter.

Mr. Bailey was good enough to continue to bear him company, and to entertain him, as they went, with easy conversation on various sporting topics; especially on the comparative merits, as a general principle, of horses with white stockings, and horses without. In regard to the style of tail to be preferred, Mr. Bailey had opinions of his own, which he explained, but begged they might by no means influence his friend's, as here he knew he had the misfortune to differ from some excellent authorities. He treated Mr. Sweedlepipe to a dram, compounded agreeably to his own directions, which he informed him had been invented by a member of the Jockey Club; and, as they were by this time near the barber's destination, he observed that, as he had an hour to spare, and knew the parties, he would, if quite agreeable, be introduced to Mrs. Gamp.

Paul knocked at Jonas Chuzzlewit's; and, on the door being opened by that lady, made the two distinguished persons known to one another. It was a happy feature in Mrs. Gamp's twofold profession, that it gave her an interest in everything that was young as well as in everything that was old. She received Mr. Bailey with much kindness.

"It's very good, I'm sure, of you to come," she said to her landlord, "as well as bring so nice a friend. But I'm afraid that I must trouble you so far as to step in, for the young couple has not yet made appearance."

"They're late, ain't they?" inquired her landlord, when she had conducted them down-stairs into the kitchen.

"Well, sir, considerin' the Wings of Love, they are," said Mrs. Gamp.

Mr. Bailey inquired whether the Wings of Love had ever won a plate, or could be backed to do anything remarkable; and being informed that it was not a horse, but merely a poetical or figurative expression, evinced considerable disgust. Mrs. Gamp was so very much astonished by his affable manners and great ease, that she was about to propound to her landlord in a whisper the staggering inquiry, whether he was a man or a boy, when Mr. Sweedlepipe, anticipating her design, made a timely diversion.

"He knows Mrs. Chuzzlewit," said Paul aloud.

"There's nothin' he don't know; that's my opinion," observed Mrs. Gamp. "All the wickedness of the world is Print to him."

Mr. Bailey received this as a compliment, and said, adjusting his cravat, "Reether so."

"As you knows Mrs. Chuzzlewit, you knows, p'raps, what her Chris'en name is?" Mrs. Gamp observed.

"Charity," said Bailey.

"That it ain't!" cried Mrs. Gamp.

"Cherry, then," said Bailey. "Cherry's short for it. It's all the same."

"It don't begin with a C at all," retorted Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head. "It begins with a M."

"Whew!" cried Mr. Bailey, slapping a little cloud of pipeclay out of his left leg, "then he's been and married the merry one!"

As these words were mysterious, Mrs. Gamp called upon him to explain, which Mr. Bailey proceeded to do: that lady listening greedily to everything he said. He was yet in the fulness of his narrative when the sound of wheels, and a double knock at the street door, announced the arrival of the newly married couple. Begging him to reserve what more he had to say, for her hearing on the way home, Mrs. Gamp took up the candle, and hurried away to receive and welcome the young mistress of the house.

"Wishing you appiness and joy with all my art," said Mrs. Gamp, dropping a curtsy as they entered the hall; "and you, too, sir. Your lady looks a little tired with the journey, Mr. Chuzzlewit, a pretty dear!"

"She has bothered enough about it," grumbled Mr. Jonas. "Now show a light, will you?"

"This way, ma'am, if you please," said Mrs. Gamp, going up-stairs before them. "Things has been made as comfortable as they could be; but there's many things you'll have to alter your own self when you gets time to look about you. Ah! sweet thing! But you don't," added Mrs. Gamp internally, "you don't look much like a merry one, I must say!"

It was true; she did not. The death that had gone before the bridal seemed to have left its shade upon the house. The air was heavy and oppressive; the rooms were dark; a deep gloom filled up every chink and corner. Upon the hearth-stone, like a creature of ill omen, sat the aged clerk, with his eyes fixed on some withered branches in the stove. He rose and looked at her.

"So there you are, Mr. Chuff," said Jonas carelessly, as he dusted his boots; "still in the land of the living, eh?"

"Still in the land of the living, sir," retorted

Mrs. Gamp. "And Mr. Chuffey may thank you for it, as many and many a time I've told him."

Mr. Jonas was not in the best of humours, for he merely said, as he looked round, "We don't want you any more, you know, Mrs. Gamp."

"I'm a going, immediate, sir," returned the nurse; "unless there's nothink I can do for you, ma'am. Ain't there," said Mrs. Gamp, with a look of great sweetness, and rummaging all the time in her pocket; "ain't there nothink I can do for you, my little bird?"

"No," said Merry, almost crying. "You had better go away, please!"

With a leer of mingled sweetness and slyness; with one eye on the future, one on the bride; and an arch expression in her face, partly spiritual, partly spirituous, and wholly professional and peculiar to her art; Mrs. Gamp rummaged in her pocket again, and took from it a printed card, whereon was an inscription copied from her sign-board.

"Would you be so good, my darling dovey of a dear young married lady," Mrs. Gamp observed, in a low voice, "as put that somewheres where you can keep it in your mind? I'm well bekhown to many ladies, and it's my card. Gamp is my name, and Gamp my nater. Livin' quite handy, I will make so bold as call in now and then, and make inquiry how your health and spirits is, my precious chick!"

And with innumerable leers, winks, coughs, nods, smiles, and curtsies, all leading to the establishment of a mysterious and confidential understanding between herself and the bride, Mrs. Gamp, invoking a blessing upon the house, leered, winked, coughed, nodded, smiled, and curtsyed herself out of the room.

"But I will say, and I would if I was led a Martha to the Stakes for it," Mrs. Gamp remarked below-stairs, in a whisper, "that she don't look much like a merry one at this present moment of time."

"Ah! wait till you hear her laugh!" said Bailey.

"Hem!" cried Mrs. Gamp in a kind of groan. "I will, child."

They said no more in the house, for Mrs. Gamp put on her bonnet, Mr. Sweedlepipe took up her box, and Mr. Bailey accompanied them towards Kingsgate-street; recounting to Mrs. Gamp, as they went along, the origin and progress of his acquaintance with Mrs. Chuzzlewit and her sister. It was a pleasant instance of this youth's precocity, that he fancied Mrs. Gamp had conceived a tenderness for him, and was much tickled by her misplaced attachment.

As the door closed heavily behind them, Mrs.

Jonas sat down in a chair, and felt a strange chill creep upon her, whilst she looked about the room. It was pretty much as she had known it, but appeared more dreary. She had thought to see it brightened to receive her.

"It ain't good enough for you, I suppose?" said Jonas, watching her looks.

"Why, it *is* dull," said Merry, trying to be more herself.

"It'll be duller before you're done with it,"

retorted Jonas, "if you give me any of your airs. You're a nice article, to turn sulky on first coming home! Ecod, you used to have life enough, when you could plague me with it. The gal's down-stairs. Ring the bell for supper, while I take my boots off!"

She roused herself from looking after him as he left the room, to do what he had desired: when the old man Chuffey laid his hand softly on her arm.



"THERE'S NOIHIN' HE DON'T KNOW; THAT'S MY OPINION," OBSERVED MRS. GAMP. "ALL THE WICKEDNESS OF THE WORLD IS PRINT TO HIM."

"You are not married?" he said eagerly. "Not married?"

"Yes. A month ago. Good Heaven, what is the matter?"

He answered nothing was the matter; and turned from her. But in her fear and wonder, turning also, she saw him raise his trembling hands above his head and heard him say:—

"Oh! woe, woe, woe, upon this wicked house!"

It was her welcome,—HOME.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SHOWING THAT OLD FRIENDS MAY NOT ONLY APPEAR WITH NEW FACES, BUT IN FALSE COLOURS. THAT PEOPLE ARE PRONE TO BITE; AND THAT BITERS MAY SOMETIMES BE BITTEN.

MR. BAILEY, Junior—for the sporting character, whilom of general utility at Todgers's, had now regularly set up in life under that name, without troubling himself to obtain from the legislature a direct licence in the form of a Private Bill, which of all kinds and classes of bills is without exception the most unreasonable in its charges—

Mr. Bailey, Junior, just tall enough to be seen by an inquiring eye, gazing indolently at society from beneath the apron of his master's cab, drove slowly up and down Pall Mall about the hour of noon, in waiting for his "Governor." The horse of distinguished family, who had Capricorn for his nephew, and Cauliflower for his brother, showed himself worthy of his high relations by champing at the bit until his chest was white with foam, and rearing like a horse in heraldry; the plated harness and the patent leather glittered in the sun; pedestrians admired; Mr. Bailey was complacent, but unmoved. He seemed to say, "A barrow, good people, a mere barrow; nothing to what we could do, if we chose!" and on he went, squaring his short green arms outside the apron, as if he were hooked on to it by his armpits.

Mr. Bailey had a great opinion of Brother to Cauliflower, and estimated his powers highly. But he never told him so. On the contrary, it was his practice, in driving that animal, to assail him with disrespectful, if not injurious, expressions, as, "Ah! would you!" "Did you think it then?" "Where are you going to now?" "No you won't, my lad!" and similar fragmentary remarks. These being usually accompanied by a jerk of the rein, or a crack of the whip, led to many trials of strength between them, and to many contentions for the upper hand, terminating, now and then, in china-shops, and other unusual goals, as Mr. Bailey had already hinted to his friend Poll Sweedlepipe.

On the present occasion Mr. Bailey, being in spirits, was more than commonly hard upon his charge; in consequence of which that fiery animal confined himself almost entirely to his hind legs in displaying his paces, and constantly got himself into positions with reference to the cabriolet that very much amazed the passengers in the street. But Mr. Bailey, not at all disturbed, had still a shower of pleasantries to bestow on any one who crossed his path: as calling to a full-grown coal-heaver in a waggon, who for a moment blocked the way, "Now, young 'un, who trusted you with a cart?" inquiring of elderly ladies who wanted to cross, and ran back again, "Why they didn't go to the work-house and get an order to be buried;" tempting boys, with friendly words, to get up behind, and immediately afterwards cutting them down; and the like flashes of a cheerful humour, which he would occasionally relieve by going round St. James's Square at a hand gallop, and coming slowly into Pall Mall by another entry, as if, in the interval, his pace had been a perfect crawl.

It was not until these amusements had been

very often repeated, and the apple-stall at the corner had sustained so many miraculous escapes as to appear impregnable, that Mr. Bailey was summoned to the door of a certain house in Pall Mall, and turning short, obeyed the call and jumped out. It was not until he had held the bridle for some minutes longer, every jerk of Cauliflower's brother's head, and every twitch of Cauliflower's brother's nostril, taking him off his legs in the meanwhile, that two persons entered the vehicle, one of whom took the reins and drove rapidly off. Nor was it until Mr. Bailey had run after it some hundreds of yards in vain, that he managed to lift his short leg into the iron step, and finally to get his boots upon the little footboard behind. Then, indeed, he became a sight to see: and—standing now on one foot and now upon the other; now trying to look round the cab on this side, now on that; and now endeavouring to peep over the top of it, as it went dashing in among the carts and coaches—was from head to heel Newmarket.

The appearance of Mr. Bailey's governor as he drove along, fully justified that enthusiastic youth's description of him to the wondering Poll. He had a world of jet-black shining hair upon his head, upon his cheeks, upon his chin, upon his upper lip. His clothes, symmetrically made, were of the newest fashion and the costliest kind. Flowers of gold and blue, and green and blushing red, were on his waistcoat; precious chains and jewels sparkled on his breast; his fingers, clogged with brilliant rings, were as unwieldy as summer flies but newly rescued from a honeypot. The daylight mantled in his gleaming hat and boots as in a polished glass. And yet, though changed his name, and changed his outward surface, it was Tigg. Though turned and twisted upside down and inside out, as great men have been sometimes known to be; though no longer Montague Tigg, but Tigg Montague; still it was Tigg; the same Satanic, gallant, military Tigg. The brass was burnished, lacquered, newly stamped; yet it was the true Tigg metal notwithstanding.

Beside him sat a smiling gentleman, of less pretensions and of business looks, whom he addressed as David. Surely not the David of the—how shall it be phrased?—the triumvirate of golden balls? Not David, tapster at the Lombards' Arms? Yes. The very man.

"The secretary's salary, David," said Mr. Montague, "the office being now established, is eight hundred pounds per annum, with his house-rent, coals, and candles free. His five-and-twenty shares he holds, of course. Is that enough?"

David smiled and nodded, and coughed behind a little locked portfolio which he carried; with an air that proclaimed him to be the secretary in question.

"If that's enough," said Montague, "I will propose it at the Board to-day, in my capacity as chairman."

The secretary smiled again; laughed, indeed, this time; and said, rubbing his nose slyly with one end of the portfolio:

"It was a capital thought, wasn't it?"

"What was a capital thought, David?" Mr. Montague inquired.

"The Anglo-Bengalee," tittered the secretary.

"The Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company, is rather a capital concern, I hope, David," said Montague.

"Capital indeed!" cried the secretary, with another laugh—"in one sense."

"In the only important one," observed the chairman; "which is number one, David."

"What," asked the secretary, bursting into another laugh, "what will be the paid up capital according to the next prospectus?"

"A figure of two, and as many oughts after it as the printer can get into the same line," replied his friend. "Ha, ha!"

At this they both laughed; and the secretary so vehemently, that in kicking up his feet, he kicked the apron open, and nearly started Cauliflower's brother into an oyster-shop; not to mention Mr. Bailey's receiving such a sudden swing, that he held on for the moment, quite a young Fame, by one strap and no legs.

"What a chap you are!" exclaimed David admiringly, when this little alarm had subsided.

"Say genius, David, genius."

"Well, upon my soul, you *are* a genius then," said David. "I always knew you had the gift of the gab, of course; but I never believed you were half the man you are. How could I?"

"I rise with circumstances, David. That's a point of genius in itself," said Tigg. "If you were to lose a hundred pound wager to me at this minute, David, and were to pay it (which is most confoundedly improbable), I should rise, in a mental point of view, directly."

It is due to Mr. Tigg to say that he had really risen with his opportunities; and peculating on a grander scale, had become a grander man, altogether.

"Ha, ha," cried the secretary, laying his hand, with growing familiarity, upon the chairman's arm. "When I look at you, and think of your property in Bengal being—ha, ha, ha!"

The half-expressed idea seemed no less ludi-

crous to Mr. Tigg than to his friend, for he laughed too, heartily.

"—Being," resumed David, "being amenable—your property in Bengal being amenable—to all claims upon the company: when I look at you and think of that, you might tickle me into fits by waving the feather of a pen at me. Upon my soul you might!"

"It's a devilish fine property," said Tigg Montague, "to be amenable to any claims. The preserve of tigers alone is worth a mint of money, David."

David could only reply in the intervals of his laughter, "Oh, what a chap you are!" and so continued to laugh, and hold his sides, and wipe his eyes, for some time, without offering any other observation.

"A capital idea?" said Tigg, returning after a time to his companion's first remark: "no doubt it was a capital idea. It was my idea."

"No, no. It was my idea," said David. "Hang it, let a man have some credit. Didn't I say to you that I'd saved a few pounds?"

"You said! Didn't I say to you," interposed Tigg, "that I had come into a few pounds?"

"Certainly you did," returned David, warmly, "but that's not the idea. Who said, that if we put the money together we could furnish an office, and make a show?"

"And who said," retorted Mr. Tigg, "that, providing we did it on a sufficiently large scale, we could furnish an office and make a show, without any money at all? Be rational, and just, and calm, and tell me whose idea was that."

"Why there," David was obliged to confess, "you had the advantage of me, I admit. But I don't put myself on a level with you. I only want a little credit in the business."

"All the credit you deserve, you have," said Tigg. "The plain work of the company, David—figures, books, circulars, advertisements, pen ink and paper, sealing-wax and wafers—is admirably done by you. You are a first-rate groveller. I don't dispute it. But the ornamental department, David; the inventive and poetical department—"

"Is entirely yours," said his friend. "No question of it. But with such a swell turn-out as this, and all the handsome things you've got about you, and the life you lead, I mean to say it's a precious comfortable department too."

"Does it gain the purpose? Is it Anglo-Bengalee?" asked Tigg.

"Yes," said David.

"Could you undertake it yourself?" demanded Tigg.

"No," said David.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Tigg. "Then be contented with your station and your profits, David, my fine fellow, and bless the day that made us acquainted across the counter of our common uncle, for it was a golden day to you."

It will have been already gathered from the conversation of these worthies, that they were embarked in an enterprise of some magnitude, in which they addressed the public in general from the strong position of having everything to gain, and nothing at all to lose; and which, based upon this great principle, was thriving pretty comfortably.

The Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company, started into existence one morning, not an Infant Institution, but a Grown-up Company running alone at a great pace, and doing business right and left: with a "branch" in a first floor over a tailor's at the west-end of the town, and main offices in a new street in the city, comprising the upper part of a spacious house, resplendent in stucco and plate-glass, with wire-blinds in all the windows, and "Anglo-Bengalee" worked into the pattern of every one of them. On the door-post was painted again in large letters, "Offices of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company," and on the door was a large brass plate with the same inscription: always kept very bright, as courting inquiry; staring the city out of countenance after office-hours on working days, and all day long on Sundays; and looking bolder than the Bank. Within, the offices were newly plastered, newly painted, newly papered, newly countered, newly floor-clothed, newly tabled, newly chaired, newly fitted-up in every way, with goods that were substantial and expensive, and designed (like the company) to last. Business! Look at the green ledgers with red backs, like strong cricket-balls beaten flat; the court-guides, directories, day-books, almanacks, letter-boxes, weighing-machines for letters, rows of fire-buckets for dashing out a conflagration in its first spark, and saving the immense wealth in notes and bonds belonging to the company; look at the iron safes, the clock, the office seal—in its capacious self, security for anything. Solidity! Look at the massive blocks of marble in the chimney-pieces, and the gorgeous parapet on the top of the house! Publicity! Why, Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company is painted on the very coal-scuttles. It is repeated at every turn until the eyes are dazzled with it, and the head is giddy. It is engraved upon the top of all the letter-paper, and it makes a scroll-work round the seal, and it shines out

of the porter's buttons, and it is repeated twenty times in every circular and public notice wherein one David Crimble, Esquire, Secretary and resident Director, takes the liberty of inviting your attention to the accompanying statement of the advantages offered by the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company: and fully proves to you that any connection on your part with that establishment must result in a perpetual Christmas Box and constantly increasing Bonus to yourself, and that nobody can run any risk by the transaction except the office, which, in its great liberality, is pretty sure to lose. And this, David Crimble, Esquire, submits to you (and the odds are heavy you believe him), is the best guarantee that can reasonably be suggested by the Board of Management for its permanence and stability.

This gentleman's name, by the way, had been originally Crimp; but as the word was susceptible of an awkward construction and might be misrepresented, he had altered it to Crimble.

Lest with all these proofs and confirmations, any man should be suspicious of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company; should doubt in tiger, cab, or person, Tigg Montague, Esquire, (of Pall Mall and Bengal), or any other name in the imaginative List of Directors; there was a porter on the premises—a wonderful creature, in a vast red waistcoat and a short-tailed pepper-and-salt coat—who carried more conviction to the minds of sceptics than the whole establishment without him. No confidences existed between him and the Directorship; nobody knew where he had served last; no character or explanation had been given or required. No questions had been asked on either side. This mysterious being, relying solely on his figure, had applied for the situation, and had been instantly engaged on his own terms. They were high; but he knew, doubtless, that no man could carry such an extent of waistcoat as himself, and felt the full value of his capacity to such an institution. When he sat upon a seat erected for him in a corner of the office, with his glazed hat hanging on a peg over his head, it was impossible to doubt the respectability of the concern. It went on doubling itself with every square inch of his red waistcoat until, like the problem of the nails in the horse's shoes, the total became enormous. People had been known to apply to effect an insurance on their lives for a thousand pounds, and looking at him, to beg, before the form of proposal was filled up, that it might be made two. And yet he was not a giant. His coat was rather small than otherwise. The whole

charm was in his waistcoat. Respectability, competence, property in Bengal or anywhere else, responsibility to any amount on the part of the company that employed him, were all expressed in that one garment.

Rival offices had endeavoured to lure him away; Lombard-street itself had beckoned to him; rich companies had whispered "Be a Beadle!" but he still continued faithful to the Anglo-Bengalee. Whether he was a deep rogue, or a stately simpleton, it was impossible to make out, but he appeared to believe in the Anglo-Bengalee. He was grave with the imaginary cares of office; and having nothing whatever to do, and something less to take care of, would look as if the pressure of his numerous duties, and a sense of the treasure in the company's strong-room, made him a solemn and thoughtful man.

As the cabriolet drove up to the door, this officer appeared bare-headed on the pavement, crying aloud "Room for the chairman, room for the chairman, if you please!" much to the admiration of the bystanders, who, it is needless to say, had their attention directed to the Anglo-Bengalee Company thenceforth, by that means. Mr. Tigg leaped gracefully out, followed by the Managing Director (who was by this time very distant and respectful), and ascended the stairs, still preceded by the porter: who cried as he went, "By your leave there! by your leave! The Chairman of the Board, Gentle—MEN!" In like manner, but in a still more stentorian voice, he ushered the chairman through the public office, where some humble clients were transacting business, into an awful chamber, labelled Board-room: the door of which sanctuary immediately closed, and screened the great capitalist from vulgar eyes.

The board-room had a Turkey carpet in it, a side-board, a portrait of Tigg Montague, Esquire, as chairman; a very imposing chair of office, garnished with an ivory hammer and a little hand-bell; and a long table, set out at intervals with sheets of blotting-paper, foolscap, clean pens, and inkstands. The chairman having taken his seat with great solemnity, the secretary supported him on his right hand, and the porter stood bolt upright behind them, forming a warm background of waistcoat. This was the board: everything else being a light-hearted little fiction.

"Bullamy!" said Mr. Tigg.

"Sir!" replied the Porter.

"Let the Medical Officer know, with my compliments, that I wish to see him."

Bullamy cleared his throat, and bustled out into the office, crying "The Chairman of the Board wishes to see the Medical Officer. By

your leave there! by your leave!" He soon returned with the gentleman in question; and at both openings of the board-room door—at his coming in and at his going out—simple clients were seen to stretch their necks and stand upon their toes, thirsting to catch the slightest glimpse of that mysterious chamber.

"Jobling, my dear friend!" said Mr. Tigg, "how are you? Bullamy, wait outside. Crimple, don't leave us. Jobling, my good fellow, I am glad to see you."

"And how are *you*, Mr. Montague, eh?" said the Medical Officer, throwing himself luxuriously into an easy chair (they were all easy chairs in the board-room), and taking a handsome gold snuff-box from the pocket of his black satin waistcoat. "How are you? A little worn with business, eh? If so, rest. A little feverish from wine, humph? If so, water. Nothing at all the matter, and quite comfortable? Then take some lunch. A very wholesome thing at this time of day to strengthen the gastric juices with lunch, Mr. Montague."

The Medical Officer (he was the same medical officer who had followed poor old Anthony Chuzzlewit to the grave, and who had attended Mrs. Gamp's patient at the Bull) smiled in saying these words; and casually added, as he brushed some grains of snuff from his shirt-frill, "I always take it myself about this time of day, do you know!"

"Bullamy!" said the Chairman, ringing the little bell.

"Sir!"

"Lunch."

"Not on my account, I hope?" said the doctor. "You are very good. Thank you. I'm quite ashamed. Ha, ha! if I had been a sharp practitioner, Mr. Montague, I shouldn't have mentioned it without a fee; for you may depend upon it, my dear sir, that if you don't make a point of taking lunch, you'll very soon come under my hands. Allow me to illustrate this. In Mr. Crimple's leg—"

The resident Director gave an involuntary start, for the doctor, in the heat of his demonstration, caught it up and laid it across his own, as if he were going to take it off, then and there.

"In Mr. Crimple's leg, you'll observe," pursued the doctor, turning back his cuffs and spanning the limb with both hands, "where Mr. Crimple's knee fits into the socket, here, there is—that is to say, between the bone and the socket—a certain quantity of animal oil."

"What do you pick *my* leg out for?" said Mr. Crimple, looking with something of an

anxious expression at his limb. "It's the same with other legs, ain't it?"

"Never you mind, my good sir," returned the doctor, shaking his head, "whether it is the same with other legs, or not the same."

"But I do mind," said David.

"I take a particular case, Mr. Montague," returned the doctor, "as illustrating my remark, you observe. In this portion of Mr. Crimple's leg, sir, there is a certain amount of animal oil. In every one of Mr. Crimple's joints, sir, there is more or less of the same deposit. Very good. If Mr. Crimple neglects his meals, or fails to take his proper quantity of rest, that oil wanes, and becomes exhausted. What is the consequence? Mr. Crimple's bones sink down into their sockets, sir, and Mr. Crimple becomes a weazen, puny, stunted, miserable man!"

The doctor let Mr. Crimple's leg fall suddenly, as if he were already in that agreeable condition: turned down his wristbands again, and looked triumphantly at the chairman.

"We know a few secrets of nature in our profession, sir," said the doctor. "Of course we do. We study for that; we pass the Hall and the College for that; and we take our station in society *by* that. It's extraordinary how little is known on these subjects generally. Where do you suppose, now"—the doctor closed one eye, as he leaned back smilingly in his chair, and formed a triangle with his hands, of which his two thumbs composed the base—"where do you suppose Mr. Crimple's stomach is?"

Mr. Crimple, more agitated than before, clapped his hand immediately below his waistcoat.

"Not at all," cried the doctor; "not at all. Quite a popular mistake! My good sir, you're altogether deceived."

"I feel it there, when it's out of order: that's all I know," said Crimple.

"You think you do," replied the doctor; "but science knows better. There was a patient of mine once," touching one of the many mourning rings upon his fingers, and slightly bowing his head, "a gentleman who did me the honour to make a very handsome mention of me in his will—'in testimony,' as he was pleased to say, 'of the unremitting zeal, talent, and attention of my friend and medical attendant, John Jobling, Esquire, M.R.C.S.,'—who was so overcome by the idea of having all his life laboured under an erroneous view of the locality of this important organ, that when I assured him, on my professional reputation, he was mistaken, he burst into tears, put out his hand, and said, 'Jobling, God bless you!' Imme-

diately afterwards he became speechless, and was ultimately buried at Brixton."

"By your leave, there!" cried Bullamy, without. "By your leave! refreshment for the Board-room!"

"Ha!" said the doctor, jocularly, as he rubbed his hands, and drew his chair nearer to the table. "The true Life Insurance, Mr. Montague. The best Policy in the world, my dear sir. We should be provident, and eat and drink whenever we can. Eh, Mr. Crimple?"

The resident Director acquiesced rather sulkily, as if the gratification of replenishing his stomach had been impaired by the unsettlement of his preconceived opinions in reference to its situation. But the appearance of the porter and under-porter with a tray covered with a snow-white cloth, which, being thrown back, displayed a pair of cold roast fowls, flanked by some potted meats and a cool salad, quickly restored his good humour. It was enhanced still further by the arrival of a bottle of excellent madeira, and another of champagne; and he soon attacked the repast with an appetite scarcely inferior to that of the medical officer.

The lunch was handsomely served, with a profusion of rich glass, plate, and china; which seemed to denote that eating and drinking on a showy scale formed no unimportant item in the business in the Anglo-Bengalee Directorship. As it proceeded, the Medical Officer grew more and more joyous and red-faced, inasmuch that every mouthful he ate, and every drop of wine he swallowed, seemed to impart new lustre to his eyes, and to light up new sparks in his nose and forehead.

In certain quarters of the city and its neighbourhood, Mr. Jobling was, as we have already seen in some measure, a very popular character. He had a portentously sagacious chin, and a pompous voice, with a rich huskiness in some of its tones that went directly to the heart, like a ray of light shining through the ruddy medium of choice old burgundy. His neckerchief and shirt-frill were ever of the whitest, his clothes of the blackest and sleekest, his gold watch-chain of the heaviest, and his seals of the largest. His boots, which were always of the brightest, creaked as he walked. Perhaps he could shake his head, rub his hands, or warm himself before a fire, better than any man alive; and he had a peculiar way of smacking his lips and saying, "Ah!" at intervals while patients detailed their symptoms, which inspired great confidence. It seemed to express, "I know what you're going to say better than you do; but go on, go on." As he talked on all occasions, whether he had

anything to say or not, it was unanimously observed of him that he was "full of anecdote;" and his experience and profit from it were considered, for the same reason, to be something much too extensive for description. His female patients could never praise him too highly; and the coldest of his male admirers would always say this for him to their friends, "that whatever Jobling's professional skill might be (and it could not be denied that he had a very high reputation), he was one of the most comfortable fellows you ever saw in your life!"

Jobling was for many reasons, and not last in the list because his connection lay principally among tradesmen and their families, exactly the sort of person whom the Anglo-Bengalee Company wanted for a medical officer. But Jobling was far too knowing to connect himself with the company in any closer ties than as a paid (and well-paid) functionary, or to allow his connection to be misunderstood abroad, if he could help it. Hence he always stated the case to an inquiring patient, after this manner:

"Why, my dear sir, with regard to the Anglo-Bengalee, my information, you see, is limited: very limited. I am the medical officer, in consideration of a certain monthly payment. The labourer is worthy of his hire; *Bis dat qui cito dat*"—"classical scholar, Jobling!" thinks the patient, "well-read man!"—"and I receive it regularly. Therefore I am bound, so far as my own knowledge goes, to speak well of the establishment." ("Nothing can be fairer than Jobling's conduct," thinks the patient, who has just paid Jobling's bill himself.) "If you put any question to me, my dear friend," says the doctor, "touching the responsibility or capital of the company, there I am at fault; for I have no head for figures, and not being a shareholder, am delicate of showing any curiosity whatever on the subject. Delicacy—your amiable lady will agree with me I am sure—should be one of the first characteristics of a medical man." ("Nothing can be finer or more gentlemanly than Jobling's feeling," thinks the patient.) "Very good, my dear sir, so the matter stands. You don't know Mr. Montague? I'm sorry for that. A remarkably handsome man, and quite the gentleman in every respect. Property, I am told, in India. House and everything belonging to him, beautiful. Costly furniture on the most elegant and lavish scale. And pictures, which even in an anatomical point of view, are per—fection. In case you should ever think of doing anything with the company, I'll pass you, you may depend upon it. I can conscientiously report you a healthy subject.

If I understand any man's constitution, it is yours; and this little indisposition has done him more good, ma'am," says the doctor, turning to the patient's wife, "than if he had swallowed the contents of half the nonsensical bottles in my surgery. For they *are* nonsense—to tell the honest truth, one half of them *are* nonsense—compared with such a constitution as his!"—"Jobling is the most friendly creature I ever met with in my life," thinks the patient; "and upon my word and honour, I'll consider of it!")

"Commission to you, doctor, on four new policies, and a loan this morning, eh?" said Crimple, looking, when they had finished lunch, over some papers brought in by the porter. "Well done!"

"Jobling, my dear friend," said Tigg, "long life to you."

"No, no. Nonsense. Upon my word I've no right to draw the commission," said the doctor, "I haven't really. It's picking your pocket. I don't recommend anybody here. I only say what I know. My patients ask me what I know, and I tell 'em what I know. Nothing else. Caution is my weak side, that's the truth; and always was from a boy. That is," said the doctor, filling his glass, "caution in behalf of other people. Whether I would repose confidence in this company myself, if I had not been paying money elsewhere for many years—that's quite another question."

He tried to look as if there were no doubt about it; but feeling that he did it but indifferently, changed the theme, and praised the wine.

"Talking of wine," said the doctor, "reminds me of one of the finest glasses of light old port I ever drank in my life; and that was at a funeral. You have not seen anything of—of *that* party, Mr. Montague, have you?" handing him a card.

"He is not buried, I hope?" said Tigg, as he took it. "The honour of his company is not requested if he is."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the doctor. "No; not quite. He was honourably connected with that very occasion though."

"Oh!" said Tigg, smoothing his moustache, as he cast his eyes upon the name. "I recollect. No. He has not been here."

The words were on his lips, when Bullamy entered, and presented a card to the Medical Officer.

"Talk of the what's his name—" observed the doctor, rising.

"And he's sure to appear, eh?" said Tigg.

"Why, no, Mr. Montague, no," returned the

doctor. "We will not say that in the present case, for this gentleman is very far from it."

"So much the better," retorted Tigg. "So much the more adaptable to the Anglo-Bengalee. Bullamy, clear the table and take the things out by the other door. Mr. Crimple, business."

"Shall I introduce him?" asked Jobling.

"I shall be eternally delighted," answered Tigg, kissing his hand and smiling sweetly.

The doctor disappeared into the outer office, and immediately returned with Jonas Chuzzlewit.

"Mr. Montague," said Jobling. "Allow me. My friend Mr. Chuzzlewit. My dear friend—our chairman. Now do you know," he added, checking himself with infinite policy, and looking round with a smile: "that's a very singular instance of the force of example. It really is a very remarkable instance of the force of example. I say *our* chairman. Why do I say our chairman? Because he is not *my* chairman, you know. I have no connection with the company, farther than giving them, for a certain fee and reward, my poor opinion, as a medical man, precisely as I may give it any day to Jack Noakes or Tom Styles. Then why do I say our chairman? Simply because I hear the phrase constantly repeated about me. Such is the involuntary operation of the mental faculty in the imitative biped man. Mr. Crimple, I believe you never take snuff? Injudicious. You should."

Pending these remarks on the part of the doctor, and the lengthened and sonorous pinch with which he followed them up, Jonas took a seat at the board, as ungainly a man as ever he has been within the reader's knowledge. It is too common with all of us, but it is especially in the nature of a mean mind, to be overawed by fine clothes and fine furniture. They had a very decided influence on Jonas.

"Now you two gentlemen have business to discuss, I know," said the doctor, "and your time is precious. So is mine; for several lives are waiting for me in the next room, and I have a round of visits to make after—after I have taken 'em. Having had the happiness to introduce you to each other, I may go about my business. Good-bye. But allow me, Mr. Montague, before I go, to say this of my friend who sits beside you: That gentleman has done more, sir," rapping his snuff-box solemnly, "to reconcile me to human nature, than any man alive or dead. Good-bye!"

With these words Jobling bolted abruptly out of the room, and proceeded in his own official department, to impress the lives in waiting with

a sense of his keen conscientiousness in the discharge of his duty, and the great difficulty of getting into the Anglo-Bengalee; by feeling their pulses, looking at their tongues, listening at their ribs, poking them in the chest, and so forth; though if he didn't well know beforehand that whatever kind of lives they were, the Anglo-Bengalee would accept them readily, he was far from being the Jobling that his friends considered him; and was not the original Jobling, but a spurious imitation.

Mr. Crimple also departed on the business of the morning; and Jonas Chuzzlewit and Tigg were left alone.

"I learn from our friend," said Tigg, drawing his chair towards Jonas with a winning ease of manner, "that you have been thinking—"

"Oh! Ecod then he'd no right to say so," cried Jonas, interrupting. "I didn't tell *him* my thoughts. If he took it into his head that I was coming here for such or such a purpose, why, that's his look-out. I don't stand committed by that."

Jonas said this offensively enough; for over and above the habitual distrust of his character, it was in his nature to seek to revenge himself on the fine clothes and the fine furniture, in exact proportion as he had been unable to withstand their influence.

"If I come here to ask a question or two, and get a document or two to consider of, I don't bind myself to anything. Let's understand that, you know," said Jonas.

"My dear fellow!" cried Tigg, clapping him on the shoulder, "I applaud your frankness. If men like you and I speak openly at first, all possible misunderstanding is avoided. Why should I disguise what you know so well, but what the crowd never dream of? We companies are all birds of prey: mere birds of prey. The only question is, whether, in serving our own turn, we can serve yours too; whether in double-lining our own nest, we can put a single-lining into yours. Oh, you're in our secret. You're behind the scenes. We'll make a merit of dealing plainly with you, when we know we can't help it."

It was remarked, on the first introduction of Mr. Jonas into these pages, that there is a simplicity of cunning, no less than a simplicity of innocence, and that in all matters involving a faith in knavery, he was the most credulous of men. If Mr. Tigg had preferred any claim to high and honourable dealing, Jonas would have suspected him though he had been a very model of probity; but when he gave utterance to Jonas's own thoughts of everything and every-

body, Jonas began to feel that he was a pleasant fellow, and one to be talked to freely.

He changed his position in his chair; not for a less awkward, but for a more boastful attitude; and smiling in his miserable conceit, rejoined:

"You an't a bad man of business, Mr. Montague. You know how to set about it I *will* say."

"Tut, tut," said Tigg, nodding confidentially,

and showing his white teeth: "we are not children, Mr. Chuzzlewit; we are grown men, I hope."

Jonas assented, and said after a short silence, first spreading out his legs, and sticking one arm akimbo to show how perfectly at home he was,

"The truth is—"

"Don't say, the truth," interposed Tigg, with another grin. "It's so like humbug."

Greatly charmed by this, Jonas began again.



"THE SPIDER AND THE FLY."

"The long and the short of it is—"

"Better," muttered Tigg. "Much better!"

"—That I didn't consider myself very well used by one or two of the old companies in some negotiations I have had with 'em—once had, I mean. They started objections they had no right to start, and put questions they had no right to put, and carried things much too high for my taste."

As he made these observations he cast down his eyes, and looked curiously at the carpet. Mr. Tigg looked curiously at him.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 15.

He made so long a pause, that Tigg came to the rescue, and said, in his pleasantest manner:

"Take a glass of wine?"

"No, no," returned Jonas, with a cunning shake of the head; "none of that, thankee. No wine over business. All very well for you, but it wouldn't do for me."

"What an old hand you are, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" said Tigg, leaning back in his chair, and leering at him through his half-shut eyes.

Jonas shook his head again, as much as to

say, "You're right there;" and then resumed, jocosely:

"Not such an old hand, either, but that I've been and got married. That's rather green, you'll say. Perhaps it is, especially as she's young. But one never knows what may happen to these women, so I'm thinking of insuring her life. It is but fair, you know, that a man should secure some consolation in case of meeting with such a loss."

"If anything *can* console him under such heart-breaking circumstances," murmured Tigg, with his eyes shut up as before.

"Exactly," returned Jonas; "if anything can. Now, supposing I did it here, I should do it cheap, I know, and easy, without bothering her about it; which I'd much rather not do, for it's just in a woman's way to take it into her head, if you talk to her about such things, that she's going to die directly."

"So it is," cried Tigg, kissing his hand in honour of the sex. "You're quite right. Sweet, silly, fluttering little simpletons!"

"Well," said Jonas, "on that account you know, and because offence has been given me in other quarters, I wouldn't mind patronising this Company. But I want to know what sort of security there is for the Company's going on. That's the—"

"Not the truth?" cried Tigg, holding up his jewelled hand. "Don't use that Sunday School expression, please!"

"The long and the short of it," said Jonas. "The long and the short of it is, what's the security?"

"The paid-up capital, my dear sir," said Tigg, referring to some papers on the table, "is, at this present moment—"

"Oh! I understand all about paid-up capitals, you know," said Jonas.

"You do?" cried Tigg, stopping short.

"I should hope so."

He turned the papers down again, and moving nearer to him, said in his ear:

"I know you do. I know you do. Look at me!"

It was not much in Jonas's way to look straight at anybody; but thus requested, he made shift to take a tolerable survey of the chairman's features. The chairman fell back a little to give him the better opportunity.

"You know me?" he inquired, elevating his eyebrows. "You recollect? You've seen me before?"

"Why, I thought I remembered your face when I first came in," said Jonas, gazing at it; "but I couldn't call to mind where I had seen

it. No. I don't remember, even now. Was it in the street?"

"Was it in Pecksniff's parlour?" said Tigg.

"In Pecksniff's parlour!" echoed Jonas, fetching a long breath. "You don't mean when—"

"Yes," cried Tigg, "when there was a very charming and delightful little family party, at which yourself and your respected father assisted."

"Well, never mind *him*," said Jonas. "He's dead and there's no help for it."

"Dead, is he!" cried Tigg. "Venerable old gentleman, is he dead! You're very like him!"

Jonas received this compliment with anything but a good grace: perhaps because of his own private sentiments in reference to the personal appearance of his deceased parent; perhaps because he was not best pleased to find that Montague and Tigg were one. That gentleman perceived it, and tapping him familiarly on the sleeve, beckoned him to the window. From this moment, Mr. Montague's jocularity and flow of spirits were remarkable.

"Do you find me at all changed since that time?" he asked. "Speak plainly."

Jonas looked hard at his waistcoat and jewels; and said, "Rather, ecod!"

"Was I at all seedy in those days?" asked Montague.

"Precious seedy," said Jonas.

Mr. Montague pointed down into the street, where Bailey and the cab were in attendance.

"Neat: perhaps dashing. Do you know whose it is?"

"No."

"Mine. Do you like this room?"

"It must have cost a lot of money," said Jonas.

"You're right. Mine too. Why don't you"—he whispered this, and nudged him in the side with his elbow—"why don't you take premiums, instead of paying 'em? That's what a man like you should do. Join us!"

Jonas stared at him in amazement.

"Is that a crowded street?" asked Montague, calling his attention to the multitude without.

"Very," said Jonas, only glancing at it, and immediately afterwards looking at him again.

"There are printed calculations," said his companion, "which will tell you pretty nearly how many people will pass up and down that thoroughfare in the course of a day. I can tell you how many of 'em will come in here, merely because they find this office here; knowing no more about it than they do of the Pyramids. Ha, ha! Join us. You shall come in cheap."

Jonas looked at him harder and harder.

"I can tell you," said Tigg in his ear, "how

many of 'em will buy annuities, effect insurances, bring us their money in a hundred shapes and ways, force it upon us, trust us as if we were the mint; yet know no more about us than you do of that crossing-sweeper at the corner. Not so much. Ha, ha!"

Jonas gradually broke into a smile.

"Yah!" said Montague, giving him a pleasant thrust in the breast; "you're too deep for us, you dog, or I wouldn't have told you. Dine with me to-morrow, in Pall Mall!"

"I will," said Jonas.

"Done!" cried Montague. "Wait a bit. Take these papers with you, and look 'em over. See," he said, snatching some printed forms from the table. "B is a little tradesman, clerk, parson, artist, author, any common thing you like."

"Yes," said Jonas, looking greedily over his shoulder. "Well!"

"B wants a loan. Say fifty or a hundred pound; perhaps more; no matter. B proposes self and two securities. B is accepted. Two securities give a bond. B insures his own life for double the amount, and brings two friends' lives also—just to patronise the office. Ha, ha, ha! Is that a good notion?"

"Ecod, that's a capital notion!" cried Jonas. "But does he really do it?"

"Do it!" repeated the chairman. "B's hard-up, my good fellow, and will do anything. Don't you see? It's my idea."

"It does you honour. I'm blest if it don't," said Jonas.

"I think it does," replied the chairman, "and I'm proud to hear you say so. B pays the highest lawful interest—"

"That an't much," interrupted Jonas.

"Right! quite right!" retorted Tigg. "And hard it is upon the part of the law that it should be so confoundedly down upon us unfortunate victims; when it takes such amazing good interest for itself from all its clients. But charity begins at home, and justice begins next door. Well! The law being hard upon us, we're not exactly soft upon B; for besides charging B the regular interest, we get B's premium, and B's friends' premiums, and we charge B for the bond, and, whether we accept him or not, we charge B for 'inquiries' (we keep a man at a pound a week to make 'em), and we charge B a trifle for the secretary; and, in short, my good fellow, we stick it into B, up hill and down dale, and make a devilish comfortable little property out of him. Ha, ha, ha! I drive B, in point of fact," said Tigg, pointing to the cabriolet, "and a thorough-bred horse he is. Ha, ha, ha!"

Jonas enjoyed this joke very much indeed. It was quite in his peculiar vein of humour.

"Then," said Tigg Montague, "we grant annuities on the very lowest and most advantageous terms, known in the money market; and the old ladies and gentlemen down in the country, buy 'em. Ha, ha, ha! And we pay 'em too—perhaps. Ha, ha, ha!"

"But there's responsibility in that," said Jonas, looking doubtful.

"I take it all myself," said Tigg Montague. "Here I am, responsible for everything. The only responsible person in the establishment! Ha, ha, ha! Then there are the Life Insurances without loans: the common policies. Very profitable, very comfortable. Money down, you know; repeated every year; capital fun!"

"But when they begin to fall in," observed Jonas. "It's all very well, while the office is young, but when the policies begin to die—that's what I am thinking of."

"At the first start, my dear fellow," said Montague, "to show you how correct your judgment is, we had a couple of unlucky deaths that brought us down to a grand piano."

"Brought you down where?" cried Jonas.

"I give you my sacred word of honour," said Tigg Montague, "that I raised money on every other individual piece of property, and was left alone in the world with a grand piano. And it was an upright-grand too, so that I couldn't even sit upon it. But, my dear fellow, we got over it. We granted a great many new policies that week (liberal allowance to solicitors, by the bye), and got over it in no time. Whenever they should chance to fall in heavily, as you very justly observed they may, one of these days; then—" he finished the sentence in so low a whisper, that only one disconnected word was audible, and that imperfectly. But it sounded like "Bolt."

"Why, you're as bold as brass!" said Jonas, in the utmost admiration.

"A man can well afford to be as bold as brass, my good fellow, when he gets gold in exchange!" cried the chairman, with a laugh that shook him from head to foot. "You'll dine with me to-morrow?"

"At what time?" asked Jonas.

"Seven. Here's my card. Take the documents. I see you'll join us!"

"I don't know about that," said Jonas. "There's a good deal to be looked into first."

"You shall look," said Montague, slapping him on the back, "into anything and everything you please. But you'll join us, I am convinced. You were made for it. Bullamy!"

Obedient to the summons and the little bell, the waistcoat appeared. Being charged to show Jonas out, it went before; and the voice within it cried, as usual, "By your leave there, by your leave! Gentleman from the board-room, by your leave!"

Mr. Montague being left alone, pondered for some moments, and then said, raising his voice, "Is Nadgett in the office there?"

"Here he is, sir." And he promptly entered; shutting the board-room door after him, as carefully as if he were about to plot a murder.

He was the man at a pound a week who made the inquiries. It was no virtue or merit in Nadgett that he transacted all his Anglo-Bengalee business secretly and in the closest confidence; for he was born to be a secret. He was a short, dried-up, withered, old man, who seemed to have secreted his very blood; for nobody would have given him credit for the possession of six ounces of it in his whole body. How he lived was a secret; where he lived was a secret; and even what he was, was a secret. In his musty old pocket-book he carried contradictory cards, in some of which he called himself a coal-merchant, in others a wine-merchant, in others a commission-agent, in others a collector, in others an accountant: as if he really didn't know the secret himself. He was always keeping appointments in the city, and the other man never seemed to come. He would sit on 'Change for hours, looking at everybody who walked in and out, and would do the like at Garraway's, and in other business coffee-rooms, in some of which he would be occasionally seen drying a very damp pocket-handkerchief before the fire, and still looking over his shoulder for the man who never appeared. He was mildewed, threadbare, shabby; always had filse upon his legs and back; and kept his linen so secret by buttoning up and wrapping over, that he might have had none—perhaps he hadn't. He carried one stained beaver glove, which he dangled before him by the forefinger as he walked or sat; but even its fellow was a secret. Some people said he had been a bankrupt, others that he had gone an infant into an ancient Chancery suit which was still depending, but it was all a secret. He carried bits of sealing-wax and a hieroglyphical old copper seal in his pocket, and often secretly indited letters in corner boxes of the trysting-places before mentioned; but they never appeared to go to anybody, for he would put them into a secret place in his coat, and deliver them to himself weeks afterwards, very much to his own surprise, quite yellow. He was that sort of man that if he

had died worth a million of money, or had died worth twopence halipenny, everybody would have been perfectly satisfied, and would have said it was just as they expected. And yet he belonged to a class; a race peculiar to the city; who are secrets as profound to one another, as they are to the rest of mankind.

"Mr. Nadgett," said Montague, copying Jonas Chuzzlewit's address upon a piece of paper, from the card which was still lying on the table, "any information about this name, I shall be glad to have myself. Don't you mind what it is. Any you can scrape together, bring me. Bring it to me, Mr. Nadgett."

Nadgett put on his spectacles, and read the name attentively; then looked at the chairman over his glasses, and bowed; then took them off and put them in their case; and then put the case in his pocket. When he had done so, he looked, without his spectacles, at the paper as it lay before him, and at the same time produced his pocket-book from somewhere about the middle of his spine. Large as it was, it was very full of documents, but he found a place for this one; and having clasped it carefully, passed it by a kind of solemn legerdemain into the same region as before.

He withdrew with another bow and without a word; opening the door no wider than was sufficient for his passage out; and shutting it as carefully as before. The chairman of the board employed the rest of the morning in affixing his sign-manual of gracious acceptance to various new proposals of annuity-purchase and insurance. The Company was looking up, for they flowed in gaily.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. MONTAGUE AT HOME. AND MR. JONAS CHUZZLEWIT AT HOME.

THERE were many powerful reasons for Jonas Chuzzlewit being strongly prepossessed in favour of the scheme which its great originator had so boldly laid open to him; but three among them stood prominently forward. Firstly, there was money to be made by it. Secondly, the money had the peculiar charm of being sagaciously obtained at other people's cost. Thirdly, it involved much outward show of homage and distinction: a board being an awful institution in its own sphere, and a director a mighty man. "To make a swingeing profit, have a lot of chaps to order about, and

get into regular good society by one and the same means, and them so easy to one's hand, ain't such a bad look-out," thought Jonas. The latter considerations were only second to his avarice; for, conscious that there was nothing in his person, conduct, character, or accomplishments, to command respect, he was greedy of power, and was, in his heart, as much a tyrant as any laurelled conqueror on record.

But he determined to proceed with cunning and caution, and to be very keen in his observation of the gentility of Mr. Montague's private establishment. For it no more occurred to this shallow knave that Montague wanted him to be so, or he wouldn't have invited him while his decision was yet in abeyance, than the possibility of that genius being able to overreach him in any way, pierced through his self-conceit by the inlet of a needle's point. He had said, in the outset, that Jonas was too sharp for him; and Jonas, who would have been sharp enough to believe him in nothing else, though he had solemnly sworn it, believed him in that instantly.

It was with a faltering hand, and yet with an imbecile attempt at a swagger, that he knocked at his new friend's door in Pall Mall when the appointed hour arrived. Mr. Bailey quickly answered to the summons. He was not proud, and was kindly disposed to take notice of Jonas; but Jonas had forgotten him.

"Mr. Montague at home?"

"I should hope he was at home, and waiting dinner too," said Bailey, with the ease of an old acquaintance. "Will you take your hat up along with you, or leave it here?"

Mr. Jonas preferred leaving it there.

"The hold name, I suppose?" said Bailey, with a grin.

Mr. Jonas stared at him in mute indignation.

"What, don't you remember hold mother Todgers's?" said Mr. Bailey, with his favourite action of the knees and boots. "Don't you remember my taking your name up to the young ladies, when you come a courting there? A regular scaly old shop, warn't it? Times is changed, ain't they? I say, how you've grown!"

Without pausing for any acknowledgment of this compliment, he ushered the visitor upstairs; and having announced him, retired with a private wink.

The lower story of the house was occupied by a wealthy tradesman, but Mr. Montague had all the upper portion, and splendid lodging it was. The room in which he received Jonas was a spacious and elegant apartment, furnished with extreme magnificence: decorated with pictures,

copies from the antique in alabaster and marble, china vases, lofty mirrors, crimson hangings of the richest silk, gilded carvings, luxurious couches, glistening cabinets inlaid with precious woods; costly toys of every sort in negligent abundance. The only guests besides Jonas were the doctor, the resident Director, and two other gentlemen, whom Montague presented in due form.

"My dear friend, I am delighted to see you. Jobbing you know, I believe?"

"I think so," said the doctor pleasantly, as he stepped out of the circle to shake hands. "I trust I have that honour. I hope so. My dear sir, I see you well. Quite well? *That's well!*"

"Mr. Wolf," said Montague, as soon as the doctor would allow him to introduce the two others, "Mr. Chuzzlewit. Mr. Pip, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

Both gentlemen were exceedingly happy to have the honour of making Mr. Chuzzlewit's acquaintance. The doctor drew Jonas a little apart, and whispered behind his hand:

"Men of the world, my dear sir—men of the world. Hem! Mr. Wolf—literary character—you needn't mention it—remarkably clever weekly paper—oh, remarkably clever! Mr. Pip—theatrical man—capital man to know—oh, capital man!"

"Well!" said Wolf, folding his arms and resuming a conversation which the arrival of Jonas had interrupted. "And what did Lord Nobley say to that?"

"Why," returned Pip, with an oath, "He didn't know what to say. Damme, sir, if he wasn't as mute as a poker. But you know what a good fellow Nobley is!"

"The best fellow in the world!" cried Wolf. "It was only last week that Nobley said to me, 'By Gad, Wolf, I've got a living to bestow, and if you had but been brought up at the University, strike me blind if I wouldn't have made a parson of you!'"

"Just like him," said Pip with another oath. "And he'd have done it!"

"Not a doubt of it," said Wolf. "But you were going to tell us"—

"Oh, yes!" cried Pip. "To be sure. So I was. At first he was dumb—sewn up, dead, sir—but after a minute he said to the Duke, 'Here's Pip. Ask Pip. Pip's our mutual friend. Ask Pip. He knows.' 'Damme!' said the Duke, 'I appeal to Pip then. Come, Pip. Bandy or not bandy? Speak out!' 'Bandy, your Grace, by the Lord Harry!' said I. 'Ha! ha!' laughed the Duke. 'To be sure she is. Bravo, Pip. Well said, Pip. I wish I may die if you're not a trump, Pip. Pop me down

among your fashionable visitors whenever I'm in town, Pip.' And so I do to this day."

The conclusion of this story gave immense satisfaction, which was in no degree lessened by the announcement of dinner. Jonas repaired to the dining-room, along with his distinguished host, and took his seat at the board between that individual and his friend the doctor. The rest fell into their places like men who were well accustomed to the house; and dinner was done full justice to, by all parties.

It was as good a one as money (or credit, no matter which) could produce. The dishes, wines, and fruits were of the choicest kind. Everything was elegantly served. The plate was gorgeous. Mr. Jonas was in the midst of a calculation of the value of this item alone, when his host disturbed him.

"A glass of wine?"

"Oh!" said Jonas, who had had several glasses already. "As much of that, as you like! It's too good to refuse."

"Well said, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" cried Wolf.

"Tom Gag, upon my soul!" said Pip.

"Positively, you know, that's—ha, ha, ha!" observed the doctor, laying down his knife and fork for one instant, and then going to work again, pell-mell—"that's epigrammatic; quite!"

"You're tolerably comfortable, I hope?" said Tigg, apart to Jonas.

"Oh! You needn't trouble your head about me," he replied. "Famous!"

"I thought it best not to have a party," said Tigg. "You feel that?"

"Why, what do you call this?" retorted Jonas. "You don't mean to say that you do this every day, do you?"

"My dear fellow," said Montague, shrugging his shoulders, "every day of my life, when I dine at home. This is my common style. It was of no use having anything uncommon for you. You'd have seen through it. 'You'll have a party?' said Crimple. 'No, I won't,' I said; 'he shall take us in the rough!'"

"And pretty smooth too, ecod!" said Jonas, glancing round the table. "This don't cost a trifle."

"Why, to be candid with you, it does not," returned the other. "But I like this sort of thing. It's the way I spend my money."

Jonas thrust his tongue into his cheek, and said, "Was it?"

"When you join us you won't get rid of your share of the profits in the same way?" said Tigg.

"Quite different," retorted Jonas.

"Well, you're right," said Tigg, with friendly

candour. "You needn't. It's not necessary. One of a Company must do it to hold the connection together; but, as I take a pleasure in it, that's my department. You don't mind dining expensively at another man's expense, I hope?"

"Not a bit," said Jonas.

"Then I hope you'll often dine with me?"

"Ah!" said Jonas, "I don't mind. On the contrary."

"And I'll never attempt to talk business to you over wine, I take my oath," said Tigg. "Oh deep, deep, deep of you this morning! I must tell 'em that. They're the very men to enjoy it. Pip, my good fellow, I've a splendid little trait to tell you of my friend Chuzzlewit, who is the deepest dog I know: I give you my sacred word of honour he is the deepest dog I know, Pip!"

Pip swore a frightful oath that he was sure of it already; and the anecdote, being told, was received with loud applause, as an incontestable proof of Mr. Jonas's greatness. Pip, in a natural spirit of emulation, then related some instances of his own depth; and Wolf, not to be left behind-hand, recited the leading points of one or two vastly humorous articles he was then preparing. These lucubrations, being of what he called a "warm complexion," were highly approved; and all the company agreed that they were full of point.

"Men of the world, my dear sir," Jobling whispered to Jonas; "thorough men of the world! To a professional person like myself, it's quite refreshing to come into this kind of society. It's not only agreeable—and nothing *can* be more agreeable—but it's philosophically improving. It's character, my dear sir; character!"

It is so pleasant to find real merit appreciated, whatever its particular walk in life may be, that the general harmony of the company was doubtless much promoted by their knowing that the two men of the world were held in great esteem by the upper classes of society, and by the gallant defenders of their country in the army and navy, but particularly the former. The least of their stories had a colonel in it; lords were as plentiful as oaths; and even the Blood Royal ran in the muddy channel of their personal recollections.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit didn't know him, I'm afraid," said Wolf, in reference to a certain personage of illustrious descent, who had previously figured in a reminiscence.

"No," said Tigg. "But we must bring him into contact with this sort of fellows."

"He was very fond of literature," observed Wolf.

"Was he?" said Tigg.

"Oh, yes; he took my paper regularly for many years. Do you know he said some good things now and then? He asked a certain Viscount, who's a friend of mine—Pip knows him—'What's the editor's name, what's the editor's name?' 'Wolf.' 'Wolf, eh? Sharp biter, Wolf. We must keep the wolf from the door, as the proverb says.' It was very well. And being complimentary, I printed it."

"But the Viscount's the boy!" cried Pip, who invented a new oath for the introduction of everything he said. "The Viscount's the boy! He came into our place one night to take Her home; rather slued, but not much; and said, 'Where's Pip? I want to see Pip. Produce Pip!'—'What's the row, my lord?'—'Shakspeare's an infernal humbug, Pip! What's the good of Shakspeare, Pip? I never read him. What the devil is it all about, Pip? There's a lot of feet in Shakspeare's verse, but there an't any legs worth mentioning in Shakspeare's plays, are there, Pip? Juliet, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and all the rest of 'em, whatever their names are, might as well have no legs at all, for anything the audience know about it, Pip. Why, in that respect they're all Miss Biffins to the audience, Pip. I'll tell you what it is. What the people call dramatic poetry is a collection of sermons. Do I go to the theatre to be lectured? No, Pip. If I wanted that, I'd go to church. What's the legitimate object of the drama, Pip? Human nature. What are legs? Human nature. Then let us have plenty of leg pieces, Pip, and I'll stand by you, my buck! And I am proud to say," added Pip, "that he *did* stand by me handsomely."

The conversation now becoming general, Mr. Jonas's opinion was requested on this subject; and as it was in full accordance with the sentiments of Mr. Pip, that gentleman was extremely gratified. Indeed, both himself and Wolf had so much in common with Jonas, that they became very amicable; and between their increasing friendship and the fumes of wine, Jonas grew talkative.

It does not follow in the case of such a person that the more talkative he becomes, the more agreeable he is; on the contrary, his merits show to most advantage, perhaps, in silence. Having no means, as he thought, of putting himself on an equality with the rest, but by the assertion of that depth and sharpness on which he had been complimented, Jonas exhibited that faculty to the utmost; and was so deep and so sharp that he lost himself in his own profundity, and cut his fingers with his own edge-tools.

It was especially in his way and character to exhibit his quality at his entertainer's expense; and while he drank of the sparkling wines, and partook of his monstrous profusion, to ridicule the extravagance which had set such costly fare before him. Even at such a wanton board, and in such more than doubtful company, this might have proved a disagreeable experiment, but that Tigg and Crimple, studying to understand their man thoroughly, gave him what license he chose: knowing that the more he took, the better for their purpose. And thus while the blundering cheat—gull that he was, for all his cunning—thought himself rolled up hedgehog fashion, with his sharpest points towards them, he was, in fact, betraying all his vulnerable parts to their unwinking watchfulness.

Whether the two gentlemen who contributed so much to the doctor's philosophical knowledge (by the way, the doctor sipped off quietly, after swallowing his usual amount of wine) had had their cue distinctly from the host, or took it from what they saw and heard, they acted their parts very well. They solicited the honour of Jonas's better acquaintance; trusted that they would have the pleasure of introducing him into that elevated society in which he was so well qualified to shine; and informed him, in the most friendly manner, that the advantages of their respective establishments were entirely at his control. In a word, they said "Be one of us!" And Jonas said he was infinitely obliged to them, and he would be: adding within himself, that so long as they "stood treat," there was nothing he would like better.

After coffee, which was served in the drawing-room, there was a short interval (mainly sustained by Pip and Wolf) of conversation; rather highly spiced and strongly seasoned. When it flagged, Jonas took it up and showed considerable humour in appraising the furniture; inquiring whether such an article was paid for; what it had originally cost; and the like. In all of this, he was, as he considered, desperately hard on Montague, and very demonstrative of his own brilliant parts.

Some Champagne Punch gave a new though temporary fillip to the entertainments of the evening. For after leading to some noisy proceedings, which were not at all intelligible, it ended in the unsteady departure of the two gentlemen of the world, and the slumber of Mr. Jonas upon one of the sofas.

As he could not be made to understand where he was, Mr. Bailey received orders to call a hackney-coach, and take him home: which that young gentleman roused himself from an uneasy

sleep in the hall, to do. It being now almost three o'clock in the morning.

"Is he hooked, do you think?" whispered Crimple, as himself and partner stood in a distant part of the room observing him as he lay.

"Ay!" said Tigg in the same tone. "With a strong iron, perhaps. Has Nadgett been here to-night?"

"Yes, I went out to him. Hearing you had company, he went away."

"Why did he do that?"

"He said he would come back early in the morning, before you were out of bed."

"Tell them to be sure and send him up to my bedside. Hush! Here's the boy! Now Mr. Bailey, take this gentleman home, and see him safely in. Hallo here! Why Chuzzlewit, halloa!"

They got him upright with some difficulty, and assisted him down-stairs, where they put his hat upon his head, and tumbled him into the coach. Mr. Bailey having shut him in, mounted the box beside the coachman, and smoked his cigar with an air of particular satisfaction; the undertaking in which he was engaged having a free and sporting character about it, which was quite congenial to his taste.

Arriving in due time at the house in the city, Mr. Bailey jumped down, and expressed the lively nature of his feelings, in a knock: the like of which had probably not been heard in that quarter since the great fire of London. Going out into the road to observe the effect of this feat, he saw that a dim light, previously visible at an upper window, had been already removed and was travelling down-stairs. To obtain a foreknowledge of the bearer of this taper, Mr. Bailey skipped back to the door again, and put his eye to the keyhole.

It was the merry one herself. But sadly, strangely altered! So careworn and dejected, so faltering and full of fear; so fallen, humbled, broken; that, to have seen her, quiet in her coffin, would have been a less surprise.

She set the light upon a bracket in the hall, and laid her hand upon her heart; upon her eyes; upon her burning head. Then she came on towards the door, with such a wild and hurried step, that Mr. Bailey lost his self-possession, and still had his eye where the keyhole had been, when she opened it.

"Aha!" said Mr. Bailey, with an effort. "There you are, are you? What's the matter? Ain't you well, though?"

In the midst of her astonishment as she recognised him in his altered dress, so much of her old smile came back to her face that Bailey

was glad. But next moment he was sorry again, for he saw tears standing in her poor dim eyes.

"Don't be frightened," said Bailey. "There ain't nothing the matter. I've brought home Mr. Chuzzlewit. He ain't ill. He's only a little swikey you know." Mr. Bailey reeled in his boots, to express intoxication.

"Have you come from Mrs. Todgers's?" asked Merry, trembling.

"Todgers's, bless you! No!" cried Mr. Bailey. "I haven't got nothing to do with Todgers's. I cut that connexion long ago. He's been a dining with my governor at the west-end. Didn't you know he was a coming to see us?"

"No," she said, faintly.

"Oh yes! We're heavy swells too, and so I tell you. Don't you come out, a catching cold in your head. I'll wake him!" And Mr. Bailey expressing in his demeanour a perfect confidence that he could carry him in with ease, if necessary, opened the coach-door, let down the steps, and giving Jonas a shake, cried, "We've got home, my flower! Tumble up then!"

He was so far recovered as to be able to respond to this appeal, and to come stumbling out of the coach in a heap, to the great hazard of Mr. Bailey's person. When he got upon the pavement, Mr. Bailey first butted at him in front, and then dexterously propped him up behind; and having steadied him by these means, he assisted him into the house.

"You go up first with the light," said Bailey to Mrs. Jonas, "and we'll foller. Don't tremble so. He won't hurt you. When I've had a drop too much, I'm full of good natur myself."

She went on before; and her husband and Bailey, by dint of tumbling over each other, and knocking themselves about, got at last into the sitting-room above stairs, where Jonas staggered into a seat.

"There!" said Mr. Bailey. "He's all right now. You ain't got nothing to cry for, bless you! He's righter than a trivet!"

The ill-favoured brute, with dress awry, and sodden face, and rumpled hair, sat blinking and drooping, and rolling his idiotic eyes about, until, becoming conscious by degrees, he recognised his wife, and shook his fist at her.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Bailey, squaring his arms with a sudden emotion. "What, you're wicious, are you? Would you though! You'd better not!"

"Pray, go away!" said Merry. "Bailey, my good boy, go home. Jonas!" she said; timidly laying her hand upon his shoulder, and bending her head down over him; "Jonas!"

"Look at her!" cried Jonas, pushing her off with his extended arm. "Look here! Look at her! Here's a bargain for a man!"

"Dear Jonas!"

"Dear Devil!" he replied, with a fierce gesture. "You're a pretty clog to be tied to a man for life, you mewling white-faced cat! Get out of my sight!"

"I know you don't mean it, Jonas. You wouldn't say it if you were sober."

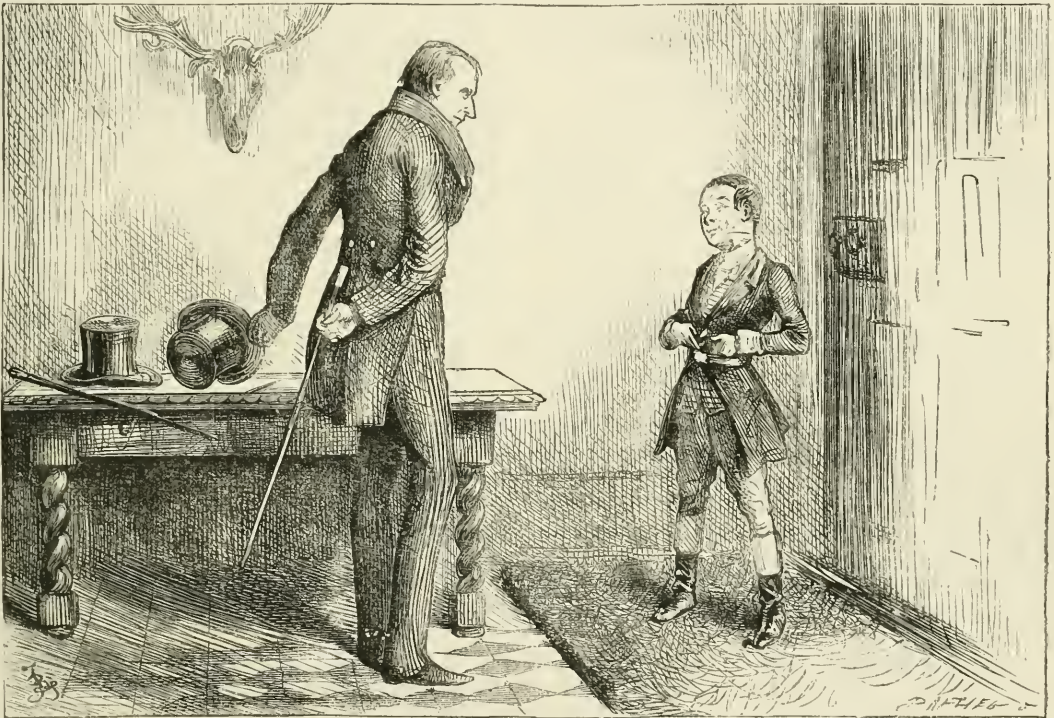
With affected gaiety she gave Bailey a piece of money, and again implored him to be gone. Her entreaty was so earnest, that the boy had

not the heart to stay there. But he stopped at the bottom of the stairs, and listened.

"I wouldn't say it if I was sober!" retorted Jonas. "You know better. Have I never said it when I was sober?"

"Often, indeed!" she answered through her tears.

"Hark ye!" cried Jonas, stamping his foot upon the ground. "You made me bear your pretty humours once, and ecod I'll make you bear mine now. I always promised myself I would. I married you that I might. I'll know who's master, and who's slave!"



"TIMES IS CHANGED, AIN'T THEY? I SAY, HOW YOU'VE GROWED!"

"Heaven knows I am obedient!" said the sobbing girl. "Much more so than I ever thought to be!"

Jonas laughed in his drunken exultation. "What! you're finding it out, are you! Patience, and you will in time! Griffins have claws, my girl. There's not a pretty slight you ever put upon me, nor a pretty trick you ever played me, nor a pretty insolence you ever showed me, that I won't pay back a hundred-fold. What else did I marry you for? *You, too!*" he said with coarse contempt.

It might have softened him—indeed it might—to hear her turn a little fragment of a song he used to say he liked; trying, with a heart so full, to win him back.

"Oho!" he said, "you're deaf, are you? You don't hear me, eh? So much the better for you. I hate you. I hate myself, for having been fool enough to strap a pack upon my back for the pleasure of treading on it whenever I choose. Why, things have opened to me, now, so that I might marry almost where I liked. But I wouldn't; I'd keep single. I ought to be

single, among the friends I know. Instead of that, here I am, tied like a log to you. Pah! Why do you show your pale face when I come home? Am I never to forget you?"

"How late it is!" she said cheerfully: opening the shutter, after an interval of silence. "Broad day, Jonas!"

"Broad day or black night, what do I care!" was the kind rejoinder.

"The night passed quickly, too. I don't mind sitting up, at all!"

"Sit up for me again, if you dare!" growled Jonas.

"I was reading," she proceeded, "all night long. I began when you went out, and read till you came home again. The strangest story, Jonas! And true the book says. I'll tell it you to-morrow."

"True, was it?" said Jonas, doggedly.

"So the book says."

"Was there anything in it, about a man's being determined to conquer his wife, break her spirit, bend her temper, crush all her humours like so many nutshells—kill her, for aught I know?" said Jonas.

"No. Not a word," she answered quickly.

"Ah!" he returned. "That'll be a true story though, before long; for all the book says nothing about it. It's a lying book, I see. A fit book for a lying reader. But you're deaf. I forgot that."

There was another interval of silence; and the boy was stealing away, when he heard her footstep on the floor, and stopped. She went up to him, as it seemed, and spoke lovingly: saying that she would defer to him in everything, and would consult his wishes and obey them, and they might be very happy if he would be gentle with her. He answered with an imprecation, and—

Not with a blow? Yes. Stern truth against the base-souled villain: with a blow

No angry cries; no loud reproaches. Even her weeping and her sobs were stifled by her clinging round him. She only said, repeating it in agony of heart, How could he, could he, could he—and lost utterance in tears.

Oh woman, God beloved in old Jerusalem! The best among us need deal lightly with thy faults, if only for the punishment thy nature will endure, in bearing heavy evidence against us, on the Day of Judgment!

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH SOME PEOPLE ARE PRECOCIOUS, OTHERS PROFESSIONAL, AND OTHERS MYSTERIOUS: ALL IN THEIR SEVERAL WAYS.



IT may have been the restless remembrance of what he had seen and heard over-night, or it may have been no deeper mental operation than the discovery that he had nothing to do, which caused Mr. Bailey, on the following afternoon, to feel particularly disposed for agreeable society, and prompted him to pay a visit to his friend Poll Sweedlepipe.

On the little bell giving clamorous notice of a visitor's approach (for Mr. Bailey came in at the door with a lunge, to get as much sound out of the bell as possible), Poll Sweedlepipe desisted from the contemplation of a favourite owl, and gave his young friend hearty welcome.

"Why, you look smarter by day," said Poll, "than you do by candle-light. I never see such a tight young dasher."

"Reether so, Polly. How's our fair friend Sairah?"

"Oh, she's pretty well," said Poll. "She's at home."

"There's the remains of a fine woman about Sairah, Poll," observed Mr. Bailey with genteel indifference.

"Oh!" thought Poll, "he's old. He must be very old!"

"Too much crumb, you know," said Mr. Bailey; "too fat, Poll. But there's many worse at her time of life."

"The very owl's a opening his eyes!" thought Poll. "I don't wonder at it, in a bird of his opinions."

He happened to have been sharpening his razors, which were lying open in a row, while a huge strop dangled from the wall. Glancing at these preparations, Mr. Bailey stroked his chin, and a thought appeared to occur to him.

"Poll," he said, "I ain't as neat as I could wish about the gills. Being here, I may as well have a shave, and get trimmed close."

The barber stood aghast; but Mr. Bailey divested himself of his neckcloth, and sat down in the easy shaving chair with all the dignity and confidence in life. There was no resisting his manner. The evidence of sight and touch became as nothing. His chin was as smooth as a new-laid egg or a scraped Dutch cheese; but Poll Sweedlepipe wouldn't have ventured to deny, on affidavit, that he had the beard of a Jewish Rabbi.

"Go *with* the grain, Poll, all round please," said Mr. Bailey, screwing up his face for the reception of the lather. "You may do wot you like with the bits of whisker. I don't care for 'em."

The meek little barber stood gazing at him with the brush and soap-dish in his hand, stirring them round and round in a ludicrous uncertainty, as if he were disabled by some fascination from beginning. At last he made a dash at Mr. Bailey's cheek. Then he stopped again, as if the ghost of a beard had suddenly receded from his touch; but receiving mild encouragement from Mr. Bailey in the form of an adjuration to "Go in and win," he lathered him bountifully. Mr. Bailey smiled through the suds in his satisfaction.

"Gently over the stones, Poll. Go a-tiptoe over the pimples!"

Poll Sweedlepipe obeyed, and scraped the lather off again with particular care. Mr. Bailey squinted at every successive dab, as it was deposited on a cloth on his left shoulder, and seemed, with a microscopic eye, to detect some bristles in it; for he murmured more than once, "Reether redder than I could wish, Poll." The operation being concluded, Paul fell back and stared at him again, while Mr. Bailey, wiping his face on the jack-towel, remarked, "that arter late hours nothing freshened up a man so much as a easy shave."

He was in the act of tying his cravat at the glass, without his coat, and Poll had wiped his razor, ready for the next customer, when Mrs. Gamp, coming down-stairs, looked in at the shop-door to give the barber neighbourly good day. Feeling for her unfortunate situation, in having conceived a regard for himself which it was not in the nature of things that he could return, Mr. Bailey hastened to soothe her with words of kindness.

"Hallo!" he said, "Sairah! I needn't ask you how you've been this long time, for you're in full bloom. All a blowin' and a growin'; ain't she, Polly?"

"Why, drat the Bragian boldness of that boy!" cried Mrs. Gamp, though not displeased. "What a imperent young sparrow it is! I wouldn't be that creetur's mother not for fifty pound!"

Mr. Bailey regarded this as a delicate confession of her attachment, and a hint that no pecuniary gain could recompense her for its being rendered hopeless. He felt flattered. Disinterested affection is always flattering.

"Ah dear!" moaned Mrs. Gamp, sinking into the shaving chair, "That there blessed Bull,

Mr. Sweedlepipe, has done his werry best to conker me. Of all the trying inwalieges in this wally of the shadder, that one beats 'em black and blue."

It was the practice of Mrs. Gamp and her friends in the profession, to say this of all the easy customers; as having at once the effect of discouraging competitors for office, and accounting for the necessity of high living on the part of the nurses.

"Talk of constitooshun!" Mrs. Gamp observed. "A person's constitooshun need be made of Bricks to stand it. Mrs. Harris jestly says to me, but t'other day, 'Oh! Sairey Gamp,' she says, 'how is it done?' 'Mrs. Harris, ma'am,' I says to her, 'we gives no trust ourselves, and puts a deal o' trust elsewere; these is our religious feelins, and we finds 'em answer.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs. Harris, 'sech is life. Vich likewise is the hend of all things!'"

The barber gave a soft murmur as much as to say that Mrs. Harris's remark, though perhaps not quite so intelligible as could be desired from such an authority, did equal honour to her head and to her heart.

"And here," continued Mrs. Gamp, "and here am I a goin twenty mile in distant, on as weltersome a chance as ever any one as month-lid ever run, I do believe. Says Mrs. Harris, with a woman's and a mother's art a beatin in her human breast, says she to me, 'You're not a goin, Sairey, Lord forgive you!' 'Why am I not a going, Mrs. Harris?' I replies. 'Mrs. Gill,' I says, 'was never wrong with six; and is it likely, ma'am—I ast you as a mother—that she will begin to be unreg'lar now? Often and often have I heerd him say,' I says to Mrs. Harris, 'meaning Mr. Gill, that he would back his wife agen Moore's almanack, to name the very day and hour, for ninepence farden. Is it likely, ma'am,' I says, 'as she will fail this once?' Says Mrs. Harris, 'No, ma'am, not in the course of nater. But,' she says, the tears a fillin' in her eyes, 'you knows much better than me, with your experience, how little puts us out. A Punch's show,' she says, 'a chimbley sweep, a newfundlan dog, or a drunken man a comin' round the corner sharp, may do it.' So it may, Mr. Sweedlepipes," said Mrs. Gamp, "there's no denying of it; and though my books is clear for full a week, I takes a anxious art along with me, I do assure you, sir."

"You're so full of zeal, you see!" said Poll. "You worrit yourself so."

"Worrit myself!" cried Mrs. Gamp, raising her hands and turning up her eyes. "You speak the truth in that, sir, if you never speaks

no more, 'twixt this and when two Sundays jines together. I feels the sufferins of other people more than I feels my own, though no one mayn't suppose it. The families I've had," said Mrs. Gamp, "if all was knowd, and credit done where credit's doo, would take a week to chris'en at St. Polge's fontip!"

"Where's the patient goin?" asked Sweedlepipe.

"Into Har'fordshire, which is his native air. But native airs nor native graces neither," Mrs. Gamp observed, "won't bring *him* round."

"So bad as that?" inquired the wistful barber. "Indeed!"

Mrs. Gamp shook her head mysteriously, and pursed up her lips. "There's fevers of the mind," she said, "as well as body. You may take your slime drafts till you flies into the air with efferwescence; but you won't cure that."

"Ah!" said the barber, opening his eyes, and putting on his raven aspect, "Lor!"

"No. You may make yourself as light as any gash balloon," said Mrs. Gamp. "But talk, when you're wrong in your head and when you're in your sleep, of certain things; and you'll be heavy in your mind."

"Of what kind of things now?" inquired Poll, greedily biting his nails in his great interest. "Ghosts?"

Mrs. Gamp, who perhaps had been already tempted further than she had intended to go, by the barber's stimulating curiosity, gave a sniff of uncommon significance, and said, it didn't signify.

"I'm a going down with my patient in the coach this artemnoon," she proceeded. "I'm a going to stop with him a day or so, till he gets a country nuss (drat them country nusses, much 'e orkard hussies knows about their bis'ness); and then I'm a comin' back; and that's my trouble, Mr. Sweedlepipes. But I hope that everythink 'll only go on right and comfortable as long as I'm away; perwisin which, as Mrs. Harris says, Mrs. Gill is welcome to choose her own time: all times of the day and night bein' equally the same to me."

During the progress of the foregoing remarks, which Mrs. Gamp had addressed exclusively to the barber, Mr. Bailey had been tying his cravat, getting on his coat, and making hideous faces at himself in the glass. Being now personally addressed by Mrs. Gamp, he turned round, and mingled in the conversation.

"You ain't been in the city, I suppose, sir, since we was all three there together," said Mrs. Gamp, "at Mr. Chuzzlewit's?"

"Yes I have, Sairah. I was there last night."

"Last night!" cried the barber.

"Yes, Poll, reether so. You can call it this morning if you like to be particular. He dined with us."

"Who does that young Limb mean by 'hus'?" said Mrs. Gamp, with most impatient emphasis.

"Me and my Governor, Sairah. He dined at our house. We was very merry, Sairah. So much so that I was obliged to see him home in a hackney coach at three o'clock in the morning." It was on the tip of the boy's tongue to relate what had followed; but remembering how easily it might be carried to his master's ears, and the repeated cautions he had had from Mr. Crimple "not to chatter," he checked himself: adding only, "She was sitting up, expecting him."

"And all things considered," said Mrs. Gamp sharply, "she might have knowd better than to go a tiring herself out, by doin' anythink of the sort. Did they seem pretty pleasant together, sir?"

"Oh yes," answered Bailey, "pleasant enough."

"I'm glad on it," said Mrs. Gamp, with a second sniff of significance.

"They haven't been married so long," observed Poll, rubbing his hands, "that they need be anything but pleasant yet awhile."

"No," said Mrs. Gamp, with a third significant signal.

"Especially," pursued the barber, "when the gentleman bears such a character as you gave him."

"I speak as I find, Mr. Sweedlepipes," said Mrs. Gamp. "Forbid it should be otherwise! But we never knows wot's hidden in each other's hearts; and if we had glass winders there, we'd need to keep the shettters up, some on us, I do assure you!"

"But you don't mean to say"—Poll Sweedlepipe began.

"No," said Mrs. Gamp, cutting him very short. "I don't. Don't think I do. The torters of the Imposition shouldn't make me own I did. All I says is," added the good woman rising, and folding her shawl about her, "that the Bull's a waitin', and the precious moments is a flyin' fast."

The little barber having in his eager curiosity a great desire to see Mrs. Gamp's patient, proposed to Mr. Bailey that they should accompany her to the Bull, and witness the departure of the coach. That young gentleman assenting, they all went out together.

Arriving at the tavern, Mrs. Gamp (who was full dressed for the journey, in her latest suit of mourning) left her friends to entertain themselves in the yard, while she ascended to the sick

room, where her fellow-labourer Mrs. Prig was dressing the invalid.

He was so wasted, that it seemed as if his bones would rattle when they moved him. His cheeks were sunken, and his eyes unnaturally large. He lay back in the easy chair like one more dead than living; and rolled his languid eyes towards the door, when Mrs. Gamp appeared, as painfully as if their weight alone were burdensome to move.

"And how are we by this time?" Mrs. Gamp observed. "We looks charming."

"We looks a deal charmer than we are, then," returned Mrs. Prig, a little chafed in her temper. "We got out of bed back'ards, I think, for we're as cross as two sticks. I never see sich a man. He wouldn't have been washed, if he'd had his own way."

"She put the soap in my mouth," said the unfortunate patient, feebly.

"Couldn't you keep it shut then?" retorted Mrs. Prig. "Who do you think's to wash one feater, and miss another, and wear one's eyes out with all manner of fine work of that description, for half-a-crown a day! If you wants to be tittivated, you must pay accordin'."

"Oh dear me!" cried the patient, "oh dear, dear!"

"There!" said Mrs. Prig, "that's the way he's been a conducting of himself, Sarah, ever since I got him out of bed, if you'll believe it."

"Instead of being grateful," Mrs. Gamp observed, "for all our little ways. Oh, fie for shame, sir, fie for shame."

Here Mrs. Prig seized the patient by the chin, and began to rasp his unhappy head with a hair-brush.

"I suppose you don't like that, neither!" she observed, stopping to look at him.

It was just possible that he didn't, for the brush was a specimen of the hardest kind of instrument producible by modern art; and his very eyelids were red with the friction. Mrs. Prig was gratified to observe the correctness of her supposition, and said triumphantly, "she knowd as much."

When his hair was smoothed down comfortably into his eyes, Mrs. Prig and Mrs. Gamp put on his neckerchief: adjusting his shirt-collar with great nicety, so that the starched points should also invade those organs, and afflict them with an artificial ophthalmia. His waistcoat and coat were next arranged: and as every button was wrenched into a wrong button-hole, and the order of his boots was reversed, he presented on the whole rather a melancholy appearance.

"I don't think it's right," said the poor weak

invalid. "I feel as if I was in somebody else's clothes. I'm all on one side; and you've made one of my legs shorter than the other. There's a bottle in my pocket too. What do you make me sit upon a bottle for?"

"Deuce take the man," cried Mrs. Gamp, drawing it forth. "If he ain't been and got my night-bottle here. I made a little cupboard of his coat when it hung behind the door, and quite forgot it, Betsey. You'll find a ingun or two, and a little tea and sugar in his t'other pocket, my dear, if you'll jest be good enough to take 'em out."

Betsey produced the property in question, together with some other articles of general chandlery; and Mrs. Gamp transferred them to her own pocket, which was a species of nankeen pannier. Refreshment then arrived in the form of chops and strong ale for the ladies, and a basin of beef-tea for the patient: which refec-tion was barely at an end when John Westlock appeared.

"Up and dressed!" cried John, sitting down beside him. "That's brave. How do you feel?"

"Much better. But very weak."

"No wonder. You have had a hard bout of it. But country air, and change of scene," said John, "will make another man of you! Why, Mrs. Gamp," he added, laughing, as he kindly arranged the sick man's garments, "you have odd notions of a gentleman's dress!"

"Mr. Lewsome an't a easy gent to get into his clothes, sir," Mrs. Gamp replied with dignity; "as me and Betsey Prig can certify afore the Lord Mayor and Uncommon Counsellors, if needful!"

John was at that moment standing close in front of the sick man, in the act of releasing him from the torture of the collars before mentioned, when he said in a whisper:

"Mr. Westlock! I don't wish to be overheard. I have something very particular and strange to say to you; something that has been a dreadful weight on my mind, through this long illness."

Quick in all his motions, John was turning round to desire the women to leave the room: when the sick man held him by the sleeve.

"Not now. I've not the strength. I've not the courage. May I tell it when I have? May I write it, if I find that easier and better?"

"May you!" cried John. "Why, Lewsome, what is this!"

"Don't ask me what it is. It's unnatural and cruel. Frightful to think of. Frightful to tell. Frightful to know. Frightful to have helped in. Let me kiss your hand for all your goodness to me. Be kinder still, and don't ask me what it is!"

At first, John gazed at him, in great surprise; but remembering how very much reduced he was, and how recently his brain had been on fire with fever, believed that he was labouring under some imaginary horror, or despondent fancy. For farther information on this point, he took an opportunity of drawing Mrs. Gamp aside, while Betsey Prig was wrapping him in cloaks and shawls, and asked her whether he was quite collected in his mind.

"Oh bless you, no!" said Mrs. Gamp. "He hates his nusses to this hour. They always does it, sir. It's a certain sign. If you could have heerd the poor dear soul a findin' fault with me and Betsey Prig, not half an hour ago, you would have wondered how it is we don't get fretted to the tomb."

This almost confirmed John in his suspicion; so not taking what had passed into any serious account, he resumed his former cheerful manner, and assisted by Mrs. Gamp and Betsey Prig, conducted Lewsome down-stairs to the coach: just then upon the point of starting.

Poll Sweedlepipe was at the door with his arms tight folded and his eyes wide open, and looked on with absorbing interest, while the sick man was slowly moved into the vehicle. His bony hands and haggard face impressed Poll wonderfully; and he informed Mr. Bailey, in confidence, that he wouldn't have missed seeing him for a pound. Mr. Bailey, who was of a different constitution, remarked, that he would have stayed away for five shillings.

It was a troublesome matter to adjust Mrs. Gamp's luggage to her satisfaction; for every package belonging to that lady had the inconvenient property of requiring to be put in a boot by itself, and to have no other luggage near it, on pain of actions at law for heavy damages against the proprietors of the coach. The umbrella with the circular patch was particularly hard to be got rid of, and several times thrust out its battered brass nozzle from improper crevices and chinks, to the great terror of the other passengers. Indeed, in her intense anxiety to find a haven of refuge for this chattel, Mrs. Gamp so often moved it, in the course of five minutes, that it seemed not one umbrella but fifty. At length it was lost, or said to be; and for the next five minutes she was face to face with the coachman, go wherever he might, protesting that it should be "made good," though she took the question to the House of Commons.

At last, her bundle, and her pattens, and her basket, and everything else, being disposed of, she took a friendly leave of Poll and Mr. Bailey, dropped a curtsey to John Westlock, and parted

as from a cherished member of the sisterhood with Betsey Prig.

"Wishin' you lots of sickness, my darling creetur," Mrs. Gamp observed, "and good places. It won't be long, I hope, afore we works together, off and on, again, Betsey; and may our next meetin' be at a large family's, where they all takes it reg'lar, one from another, turn and turn about, and has it business-like."

"I don't care how soon it is," said Mrs. Prig; "nor how many weeks it lasts."

Mrs. Gamp with a reply in a congenial spirit was backing to the coach, when she came in contact with a lady and gentleman who were passing along the footway.

"Take care, take care here!" cried the gentleman. "Halloo! My dear! Why, it's Mrs. Gamp!"

"What, Mr. Mould!" exclaimed the nurse. "And Mrs. Mould! who would have thought as we should ever have a meetin' here, I'm sure!"

"Going out of town, Mrs. Gamp?" cried Mould. "That's unusual, isn't it?"

"It *is* unusual, sir," said Mrs. Gamp. "But only for a day or two at most. The gent," she whispered, "as I spoke about."

"What, in the coach!" cried Mould. "The one you thought of recommending? Very odd. My dear, this will interest you. The gentleman that Mrs. Gamp thought likely to suit us, is in the coach, my love."

Mrs. Mould was greatly interested.

"Here, my dear. You can stand upon the door-step," said Mould, "and take a look at him. Ha! There he is. Where's my glass? Oh! all right, I've got it. Do you see him, my dear?"

"Quite plain," said Mrs. Mould.

"Upon my life you know, this is a very singular circumstance," said Mould, quite delighted. "This is the sort of thing, my dear, I wouldn't have missed on any account. It tickles one. It's interesting. It's almost a little play, you know. Ah! There he is. To be sure. Looks poorly, Mrs. M., don't he?"

Mrs. Mould assented.

"He's coming our way, perhaps, after all," said Mould. "Who knows! I feel as if I ought to show him some little attention, really. He don't seem a stranger to me. I'm very much inclined to move my hat, my dear."

"He's looking hard this way," said Mrs. Mould.

"Then I will!" cried Mould. "How d'ye do, sir? I wish you good day. Ha! He bows too. Very gentlemanly. Mrs. Gamp has the cards in her pocket, I have no doubt. This

is very singular, my dear—and very pleasant. I am not superstitious, but it really seems as if one was destined to pay him those little melancholy civilities which belong to our peculiar line of business. There can be no kind of objection to your kissing your hand to him, my dear.”

Mrs. Mould did so.

“Ha!” said Mould. “He’s evidently gratified. Poor fellow! I’m quite glad you did it, my love. Bye bye, Mrs. Gamp!” waving his hand. “There he goes; there he goes!”

So he did; for the coach rolled off as the words were spoken. Mr. and Mrs. Mould, in high good humour, went their merry way. Mr. Bailey retired with Poll Sweedlepipe as soon as possible; but some little time elapsed before he could remove his friend from the ground, owing to the impression wrought upon the barber’s nerves by Mrs. Prig, whom he pronounced, in admiration of her beard, to be a woman of transcendent charms.

When the light cloud of bustle hanging round the coach was thus dispersed, Nadgett was seen in the darkest box of the Bull coffee-room, looking wistfully up at the clock—as if the man who never appeared were a little behind his time.

CHAPTER XXX.

PROVES THAT CHANGES MAY BE RUNG IN THE BEST-REGULATED FAMILIES, AND THAT MR. PECKSNIFF WAS A SPECIAL HAND AT A TRIPLE-BOB-MAJOR.

AS the surgeon’s first care after amputating a limb is to take up the arteries the cruel knife has severed, so it is the duty of this history, which in its remorseless course has cut from the Pecksniffian trunk its right arm, Mercy, to look to the parent stem, and see how in all its various ramifications it got on without her.

And first of Mr. Pecksniff, it may be observed, that having provided for his younger daughter that choicest of blessings, a tender and indulgent husband; and having gratified the dearest wish of his parental heart by establishing her in life so happily; he renewed his youth, and spreading the plumage of his own bright conscience, felt himself equal to all kinds of flights. It is customary with fathers in stage-plays, after giving their daughters to the men of their hearts, to congratulate themselves on having no other business on their hands but to die immediately: though it is rarely found

that they are in a hurry to do it. Mr. Pecksniff, being a father of a more sage and practical class, appeared to think that his immediate business was to live; and having deprived himself of one comfort, to surround himself with others.

But however much inclined the good man was, to be jocose and playful, and in the garden of his fancy to disport himself (if one may say so), like an architectural kitten, he had one impediment constantly opposed to him. The gentle Cherry, stung by a sense of slight and injury, which far from softening down or wearing out, rankled and festered in her heart—the gentle Cherry was in flat rebellion. She waged fierce war against her dear Papa; she led her parent what is usually called, for want of a better figure of speech, the life of a dog. But never did that dog live, in kennel, stable-yard, or house, whose life was half as hard as Mr. Pecksniff’s with his gentle child.

The father and daughter were sitting at their breakfast. Tom had retired, and they were alone. Mr. Pecksniff frowned at first; but having cleared his brow, looked stealthily at his child. Her nose was very red indeed, and screwed up tight, with hostile preparation.

“Cherry,” cried Mr. Pecksniff, “what is amiss between us? My child, why are we disunited?”

Miss Pecksniff’s answer was scarcely a response to this gush of affection, for it was simply, “Bother, Pa!”

“Bother!” repeated Mr. Pecksniff, in a tone of anguish.

“Oh! ’tis too late, Pa,” said his daughter, calmly, “to talk to me like that. I know what it means, and what its value is.”

“This is hard!” cried Mr. Pecksniff, addressing his breakfast-cup. “This is very hard! She is my child. I carried her in my arms, when she wore shapeless worsted shoes—I might say, mufflers—many years ago!”

“You needn’t taunt me with that, Pa,” retorted Cherry, with a spiteful look. “I am not so many years older than my sister, either, though she *is* married to your friend!”

“Ah, human nature, human nature! Poor human nature!” said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head at human nature as if he didn’t belong to it. “To think that this discord should arise from such a cause! oh dear, oh dear!”

“From such a cause indeed!” cried Cherry. “State the real cause, Pa, or I’ll state it myself. Mind! I will!”

Perhaps the energy with which she said this was infectious. However that may be, Mr. Peck-

sniff changed his tone and the expression of his face, for one of anger if not downright violence, when he said :

"You will! you have. You did yesterday. You do always. You have no decency; you make no secret of your temper; you have exposed yourself to Mr. Chuzzlewit a hundred times!"

"Myself!" cried Cherry, with a bitter smile. "Oh indeed! I don't mind that."

"Me too, then," said Mr. Pecksniff.

His daughter answered with a scornful laugh.

"And since we have come to an explanation, Charity," said Mr. Pecksniff, rolling his head portentously, "let me tell you that I won't allow it. None of your nonsense, Miss! I won't permit it to be done."

"I shall do," said Charity, rocking her chair backwards and forwards, and raising her voice to a high pitch, "I shall do, Pa, what I please and what I have done. I am not going to be crushed in everything, depend upon it. I've been more shamefully used than anybody ever was in this world," here she began to cry and sob, "and may expect the worst treatment from you, I know. But I don't care for that. No I don't!"

Mr. Pecksniff was made so desperate by the loud tone in which she spoke, that, after looking about him in frantic uncertainty for some means of softening it, he rose and shook her until the ornamental bow of hair upon her head nodded like a plume. She was so very much astonished by this assault, that it really had the desired effect.

"I'll do it again!" cried Mr. Pecksniff as he resumed his seat, and fetched his breath, "if you dare to talk in that loud manner. How do you mean about being shamefully used? If Mr. Jonas chose your sister in preference to you, who could help it, I should wish to know. What have I to do with it?"

"Wasn't I made a convenience of? Wern't my feelings trifled with? Didn't he address himself to me first?" sobbed Cherry, clasping her hands; "and oh good gracious, that I should live to be shook!"

"You'll live to be shaken again," returned her parent, "if you drive me to that means of maintaining the decorum of this humble roof. You surprise me. I wonder you have not more spirit. If Mr. Jonas didn't care for you, how could you wish to have him?"

"I wish to have him!" exclaimed Cherry. "I wish to have him, Pa!"

"Then what are you making all this piece of work for," retorted her father, "if you didn't wish to have him?"

"Because I was treated with duplicity," said Cherry; "and because my own sister and my own father conspired against me. I am not angry with *her*," said Cherry, looking much more angry than ever. "I pity her. I'm sorry for her. I know the fate that's in store for her, with that Wretch."

"Mr. Jonas will survive your calling him a wretch, my child, I dare say," said Mr. Pecksniff, with returning resignation; "but call him what you like and make an end of it."

"Not an end, Pa," said Charity. "No, not an end. That's not the only point on which we're not agreed. I won't submit to it. It's better you should know that, at once. No; I won't submit to it indeed, Pa! I am not quite a fool, and I am not blind. All I have got to say, is, I won't submit to it."

Whatever she meant, she shook Mr. Pecksniff now; for his lame attempt to seem composed, was melancholy in the last degree. His anger changed to meekness, and his words were mild and fawning.

"My dear," he said; "if in the short excitement of an angry moment I resorted to any unjustifiable means of suppressing a little outbreak calculated to injure you as well as myself—it's possible I may have done so; perhaps I did—I ask your pardon. A father asking pardon of his child," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is, I believe, a spectacle to soften the most rugged nature."

But it didn't at all soften Miss Pecksniff: perhaps because her nature was not rugged enough. On the contrary, she persisted in saying, over and over again, that she wasn't quite a fool, and wasn't blind, and wouldn't submit to it.

"You labour under some mistake, my child!" said Mr. Pecksniff: "but I will not ask you what it is: I don't desire to know. No, pray!" he added, holding out his hand and colouring again, "let us avoid the subject, my dear, whatever it is!"

"It's quite right that the subject should be avoided between us, sir," said Cherry. "But I wish to be able to avoid it altogether, and consequently must beg you to provide me with a home."

Mr. Pecksniff looked about the room, and said "A home, my child!"

"Another home, Papa," said Cherry, with increasing stateliness. "Place me at Mrs. Todgers's or somewhere, on an independent footing; but I will not live here, if such is to be the case."

It is possible that Miss Pecksniff saw in Mrs. Todgers's a vision of enthusiastic men, pining

to fall, in adoration, at her feet. It is possible that Mr. Pecksniff, in his new-born juvenility, saw in the suggestion of that same establishment, an easy means of relieving himself from an irksome charge in the way of temper and watchfulness. It is undoubtedly a fact that in the attentive ears of Mr. Pecksniff, the proposition did not sound quite like the dismal knell of all his hopes.

But he was a man of great feeling, and acute sensibility; and he squeezed his pocket-hand-

kerchief against his eyes with both hands—as such men always do: especially when they are observed. “One of my birds,” Mr. Pecksniff said, “has left me for the stranger’s breast; the other would take wing to Todgers’s! Well, well, what am I? I don’t know what I am, exactly. Never mind!”

Even this remark, made more pathetic perhaps by his breaking down in the middle of it, had no effect upon Charity. She was grim, rigid, and inflexible.



“RUSTLING AMONG LAST YEAR’S LEAVES, WHOSE SCENT WOKE MEMORY OF THE PAST, THE PLACID PECKSNIFF STROLLED.”

“But I have ever,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “sacrificed my children’s happiness to my own—I mean my own happiness to my children’s—and I will not begin to regulate my life by other rules of conduct now. If you can be happier at Mrs. Todgers’s than in your father’s house, my dear, go to Mrs. Todgers’s! Do not think of me, my girl!” said Mr. Pecksniff, with emotion: “I shall get on pretty well, no doubt.”

Miss Charity, who knew he had a secret pleasure in the contemplation of the proposed

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change, suppressed her own, and went on to negotiate the terms. His views upon this subject were at first so very limited that another difference, involving possibly another shaking, threatened to ensue; but by degrees they came to something like an understanding, and the storm blew over. Indeed Miss Charity’s idea was so agreeable to both, that it would have been strange if they had not come to an amicable agreement. It was soon arranged between them that the project should be tried, and that

immediately; and that Cherry's not being well, and needing change of scene, and wishing to be near her sister, should form the excuse for her departure, to Mr. Chuzzlewit and Mary, to both of whom she had pleaded indisposition for some time past. These premises agreed on, Mr. Pecksniff gave her his blessing, with all the dignity of a self-denying man who had made a hard sacrifice, but comforted himself with the reflection that virtue is its own reward. Thus they were reconciled for the first time since that not easily forgiven night, when Mr. Jonas, repudiating the elder, had confessed his passion for the younger sister, and Mr. Pecksniff had abetted him on moral grounds.

But how happened it—in the name of an unexpected addition to that small family, the Seven Wonders of the World, whatever and wherever they may be, how happened it—that Mr. Pecksniff and his daughter were about to part? How happened it that their mutual relations were so greatly altered? Why was Miss Pecksniff so clamorous to have it understood that she was neither blind nor foolish, and she wouldn't bear it? It is not possible that Mr. Pecksniff had any thoughts of marrying again! or that his daughter with the sharp eye of a single woman, fathomed his design.

Let us inquire into this.

Mr. Pecksniff, as a man without reproach, from whom the breath of slander passed like common breath from any other polished surface, could afford to do what common men could not. He knew the purity of his own motives; and when he had a motive worked at it as only a very good man (or a very bad one) can. Did he set before himself any strong and palpable motives for taking a second wife? Yes: and not one or two of them, but a combination of very many.

Old Martin Chuzzlewit had gradually undergone an important change. Even upon the night when he made such an ill-timed arrival at Mr. Pecksniff's house, he was comparatively subdued and easy to deal with. This Mr. Pecksniff attributed, at the time, to the effect his brother's death had had upon him. But from that hour his character seemed to have modified by regular degrees, and to have softened down into a dull indifference for almost every one but Mr. Pecksniff. His looks were much the same as ever, but his mind was singularly altered. It was not that this or that passion stood out in brighter or in dimmer hues; but that the colour of the whole man was faded. As one trait disappeared, no other trait sprung up to take its place. His senses dwindled too. He

was less keen of sight; was deaf sometimes; took little notice of what passed before him; and would be profoundly taciturn for days together. The process of this alteration was so easy, that almost as soon as it began to be observed it was complete. But Mr. Pecksniff saw it first, and having Anthony Chuzzlewit fresh in his recollection, saw in his brother Martin the same process of decay.

To a gentleman of Mr. Pecksniff's tenderness, this was a very mournful sight. He could not but foresee the probability of his respected relative being made the victim of designing persons, and of his riches falling into worthless hands. It gave him so much pain that he resolved to secure the property to himself; to keep bad testamentary suitors at a distance; to wall up the old gentleman, as it were, for his own use. By little and little, therefore, he began to try whether Mr. Chuzzlewit gave any promise of becoming an instrument in his hands; and finding that he did, and indeed that he was very supple in his plastic fingers, he made it the business of his life—kind soul!—to establish an ascendancy over him: and every little test he durst apply meeting with a success beyond his hopes, he began to think he heard old Martin's cash already chinking in his own unworldly pockets.

But when Mr. Pecksniff pondered on this subject (as in his zealous way, he often did), and thought with an uplifted heart of the train of circumstances which had delivered the old gentleman into his hands for the confusion of evil-doers and the triumph of a righteous nature, he always felt that Mary Graham was his stumbling-block. Let the old man say what he would, Mr. Pecksniff knew he had a strong affection for her. He knew that he showed it in a thousand little ways; that he liked to have her near him, and was never quite at ease when she was absent long. That he had ever really sworn to leave her nothing in his will, Mr. Pecksniff greatly doubted. That even if he had, there were many ways by which he could evade the oath and satisfy his conscience, Mr. Pecksniff knew. That her unprotected state was no light burden on the old man's mind, he also knew, for Mr. Chuzzlewit had plainly told him so. "Then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "what if I married her! What," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, sticking up his hair and glancing at his bust by Spoker: "What if, making sure of his approval first—he is nearly imbecile, poor gentleman—I married her!"

Mr. Pecksniff had a lively sense of the Beautiful: especially in women. His manner

towards the sex was remarkable for its insinuating character. It is recorded of him in another part of these pages, that he embraced Mrs. Todgers on the smallest provocation: and it was a way he had: it was a part of the gentle placidity of his disposition. Before any thought of matrimony was in his mind, he had bestowed on Mary many little tokens of his spiritual admiration. They had been indignantly received, but that was nothing. True, as the idea expanded within him, these had become too ardent to escape the piercing eye of Cherry, who read his scheme at once; but he had always felt the power of Mary's charms. So Interest and Inclination made a pair, and drew the curricula of Mr. Pecksniff's plan.

As to any thought of revenging himself on young Martin for his insolent expressions when they parted, and of shutting him out still more effectually from any hope of reconciliation with his grandfather, Mr. Pecksniff was much too meek and forgiving to be suspected of harbouring it. As to being refused by Mary, Mr. Pecksniff was quite satisfied that in her position she could never hold out if he and Mr. Chuzzlewit were both against her. As to consulting the wishes of her heart in such a case, it formed no part of Mr. Pecksniff's moral code; for he knew what a good man he was, and what a blessing he must be to anybody. His daughter having broken the ice, and the murder being out between them, Mr. Pecksniff had now only to pursue his design as cleverly as he could, and by the craftiest approaches.

"Well, my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, meeting old Martin in the garden, for it was his habit to walk in and out by that way, as the fancy took him: "and how is my dear friend this delicious morning?"

"Do you mean me?" asked the old man.

"Ah!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "one of his deaf days, I see. Could I mean any one else, my dear sir?"

"You might have meant Mary," said the old man.

"Indeed I might. Quite true. I might speak of her as a dear, dear friend, I hope?" observed Mr. Pecksniff.

"I hope so," returned Old Martin. "I think she deserves it."

"Think!" cried Pecksniff. "Think, Mr. Chuzzlewit!"

"You are speaking I know," returned Martin, "but I don't catch what you say. Speak up!"

"He's getting deafer than a flint," said Pecksniff. "I was saying, my dear sir, that I am

afraid I must make up my mind to part with Cherry."

"What has *she* been doing?" asked the old man

"He puts the most ridiculous questions I ever heard!" muttered Mr. Pecksniff. "He's a child to-day." After which he added in a mild roar: "She hasn't been doing anything, my dear friend."

"What are you going to part with her for?" demanded Martin.

"She hasn't her health by any means," said Mr. Pecksniff. "She misses her sister, my dear sir; they doted on each other from the cradle. And I think of giving her a run in London for a change. A good long run, sir, if I find she likes it."

"Quite right," cried Martin. "It's judicious."

"I am glad to hear you say so. I hope you mean to bear me company in this dull part, while she's away?" said Mr. Pecksniff.

"I have no intention of removing from it," was Martin's answer.

"Then why," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking the old man's arm in his, and walking slowly on: "Why, my good sir, can't you come and stay with me? I am sure I could surround you with more comforts—lowly as is my Cot—than you can obtain at a village house of entertainment. And pardon me, Mr. Chuzzlewit, pardon me if I say that such a place as the Dragon, however well-conducted (and, as far as I know, Mrs. Lupin is one of the worthiest creatures in this county), is hardly a home for Miss Graham."

Martin mused a moment: and then said, as he shook him by the hand,

"No. You're quite right; it is not."

"The very sight of skittles," Mr. Pecksniff eloquently pursued, "is far from being congenial to a delicate mind."

"It's an amusement of the vulgar," said old Martin, "certainly."

"Of the very vulgar," Mr. Pecksniff answered.

"Then why not bring Miss Graham here, sir? Here is the house! Here am I alone in it, for Thomas Pinch I do not count as any one. Our lovely friend shall occupy my daughter's chamber; you shall choose your own; we shall not quarrel, I hope!"

"We are not likely to do that," said Martin.

Mr. Pecksniff pressed his hand. "We understand each other, my dear sir, I see!—I can wind him," he thought, with exultation, "round my little finger!"

"You leave the recompense to me?" said the old man, after a minute's silence.

"Oh! Do not speak of recompense!" cried Pecksniff.

"I say," repeated Martin, with a glimmer of his old obstinacy, "you leave the recompense to me. Do you?"

"Since you desire it, my good sir."

"I always desire it," said the old man. "You know I always desire it. I wish to pay as I go, even when I buy of you. Not that I do not leave a balance to be settled one day, Pecksniff."

The architect was too much overcome to speak. He tried to drop a tear upon his patron's hand, but couldn't find one in his dry distillery.

"May that day be very distant!" was his pious exclamation. "Ah sir! If I could say how deep an interest I have in you and yours! I allude to our beautiful young friend."

"True," he answered. "True. She need have some one interested in her. I did her wrong to train her as I did. Orphan though she was, she would have found some one to protect her whom she might have loved again. When she was a child, I pleased myself with the thought that in gratifying my whim of placing her between me and false-hearted knaves, I had done her a kindness. Now she is a woman I have no such comfort. She has no protector but herself. I have put her at such odds with the world, that any dog may bark or fawn upon her at his pleasure. Indeed she stands in need of delicate consideration. Yes; indeed she does!"

"If her position could be altered and defined, sir?" Mr. Pecksniff hinted.

"How can that be done? Should I make a seamstress of her, or a governess?"

"Heaven forbid!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "My dear sir, there are other ways. There are indeed. But I am much excited and embarrassed at present, and would rather not pursue the subject. I scarcely know what I mean. Permit me to resume it at another time."

"You are not unwell?" asked Martin anxiously.

"No, no!" cried Pecksniff. "No. Permit me to resume it at another time. I'll walk a little. Bless you!"

Old Martin blessed him in return, and squeezed his hand. As he turned away, and slowly walked towards the house, Mr. Pecksniff stood gazing after him: being pretty well recovered from his late emotion, which, in any other man, one might have thought had been assumed as a machinery for feeling Martin's pulse. The change in the old man found such a slight expression in his figure, that Mr. Peck-

sniff, looking after him, could not help saying to himself,

"And I can wind him round my little finger! Only think!"

Old Martin happening to turn his head, saluted him affectionately. Mr. Pecksniff returned the gesture.

"Why the time was," said Mr. Pecksniff; "and not long ago, when he wouldn't look at me! How soothing is this change. Such is the delicate texture of the human heart; so complicated is the process of its being softened! Externally he looks the same, and I can wind him round my little finger. Only think!"

In sober truth, there did appear to be nothing on which Mr. Pecksniff might not have ventured with Martin Chuzzlewit; for whatever Mr. Pecksniff said or did was right, and whatever he advised was done. Martin had escaped so many snares from needy fortune-hunters, and had withered in the shell of his suspicion and distrust for so many years, but to become the good man's tool and plaything. With the happiness of this conviction painted on his face, the architect went forth upon his morning walk.

The summer weather in his bosom was reflected in the breast of Nature. Through deep green vistas where the boughs arched over-head, and showed the sunlight flashing in the beautiful perspective; through dewy fern from which the startled hares leaped up, and fled at his approach; by mantled pools, and fallen trees, and down in hollow places, rustling among last year's leaves whose scent woke memory of the past; the placid Pecksniff strolled. By meadow gates and hedges fragrant with wild roses; and by thatched-roof cottages whose inmates humbly bowed before him as a man both good and wise; the worthy Pecksniff walked in tranquil meditation. The bee passed onward, humming of the work he had to do; the idle gnats for ever going round and round in one contracting and expanding ring, yet always going on as fast as he, danced merrily before him; the colour of the long grass came and went, as if the light clouds made it timid as they floated through the distant air. The birds, so many Pecksniff consciences, sang gaily upon every branch; and Mr. Pecksniff paid *his* homage to the day by ruminating on his projects as he walked along.

Chancing to trip, in his abstraction, over the spreading root of an old tree, he raised his pious eyes to take a survey of the ground before him. It startled him to see the embodied image of his thoughts not far a-head. Mary herself. And alone.

At first Mr. Pecksniff stopped as if with the

intention of avoiding her; but his next impulse was, to advance, which he did at a brisk pace; carolling as he went, so sweetly and with so much innocence, that he only wanted feathers and wings to be a bird.

Hearing notes behind her, not belonging to the songsters of the grove, she looked round. Mr. Pecksniff kissed his hand, and was at her side immediately.

"Communing with Nature?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "So am I."

She said the morning was so beautiful that she had walked further than she intended, and would return. Mr. Pecksniff said it was exactly his case, and he would return with her.

"Take my arm, sweet girl," said Mr. Pecksniff.

Mary declined it, and walked so very fast that he remonstrated. "You were loitering when I came upon you," Mr. Pecksniff said. "Why be so cruel as to hurry now! You would not shun me, would you?"

"Yes, I would," she answered, turning her glowing cheek indignantly upon him, "you know I would. Release me, Mr. Pecksniff. Your touch is disagreeable to me."

His touch! What, that chaste patriarchal touch which Mrs. Todgers—surely a discreet lady—had endured, not only without complaint, but with apparent satisfaction! This was positively wrong. Mr. Pecksniff was sorry to hear her say it.

"If you have not observed," said Mary, "that it is so, pray take the assurance from my lips, and do not, as you are a gentleman, continue to offend me."

"Well, well!" said Mr. Pecksniff, mildly, "I feel that I might consider this becoming in a daughter of my own, and why should I object to it in one so beautiful! It's harsh. It cuts me to the soul," said Mr. Pecksniff: "but I cannot quarrel with you, Mary."

She tried to say she was sorry to hear it, but burst into tears. Mr. Pecksniff now repeated the Todgers' performance on a comfortable scale, as if he intended it to last some time; and in his disengaged hand, catching hers, employed himself in separating the fingers with his own, and sometimes kissing them, as he pursued the conversation thus:

"I am glad we met. I am very glad we met. I am able now to ease my bosom of a heavy load, and speak to you in confidence. Mary," said Mr. Pecksniff, in his tenderest tones: indeed, they were so very tender that he almost squeaked: "My soul! I love you!"

A fantastic thing, that maiden affectation! She made believe to shudder.

"I love you," said Mr. Pecksniff, "my gentle life, with a devotion which is quite surprising, even to myself. I did suppose that the sensation was buried in the silent tomb of a lady, only second to you in qualities of the mind and form; but I find I am mistaken."

She tried to disengage her hand, but might as well have tried to free herself from the embrace of an affectionate boa constrictor: if anything so wily may be brought into comparison with Pecksniff.

"Although I am a widower," said Mr. Pecksniff, examining the rings upon her fingers, and tracing the course of one delicate blue vein with his fat thumb, "a widower with two daughters, still I am not encumbered, my love. One of them, as you know, is married. The other, by her own desire, but with a view, I will confess—why not?—to my altering my condition, is about to leave her father's house. I have a character, I hope. People are pleased to speak well of me, I think. My person and manner are not absolutely those of a monster, I trust. Ah, naughty Hand!" said Mr. Pecksniff, apostrophising the reluctant prize, why did you take me prisoner! Go, go!"

He slapped the hand to punish it; but relenting, folded it in his waistcoat, to comfort it again.

"Blessed in each other, and in the society of our venerable friend, my darling," said Mr. Pecksniff, "we shall be happy. When he is wafted to a haven of rest, we will console each other. My pretty primrose, what do you say?"

"It is possible," Mary answered, in a hurried manner, "that I ought to feel grateful for this mark of your confidence. I cannot say that I do, but I am willing to suppose you may deserve my thanks. Take them; and pray leave me, Mr. Pecksniff."

The good man smiled a greasy smile; and drew her closer to him.

"Pray, pray release me, Mr. Pecksniff. I cannot listen to your proposal. I cannot receive it. There are many to whom it may be acceptable, but it is not so to me. As an act of kindness and an act of pity, leave me!"

Mr. Pecksniff walked on with his arm round her waist, and her hand in his, as contentedly as if they had been all in all to each other, and were joined together in the bonds of truest love.

"If you force me by your superior strength," said Mary, who finding that good words had not the least effect upon him, made no further effort to suppress her indignation: "if you force me by your superior strength to accompany you back, and to be the subject of your insolence

upon the way, you cannot constrain the expression of my thoughts. I hold you in the deepest abhorrence. I know your real nature and despise it."

"No, no," said Mr. Pecksniff, sweetly. "No, no, no!"

"By what arts or unhappy chances you have gained your influence over Mr. Chuzzlewit, I do not know," said Mary: "it may be strong enough to soften even this, but he shall know of this, trust me, sir."

Mr. Pecksniff raised his heavy eyelids languidly, and let them fall again. It was saying with perfect coolness, "Aye, aye! Indeed!"

"Is it not enough," said Mary, "that you warp and change his nature, adapt his every prejudice to your bad ends, and harden a heart naturally kind by shutting out the truth and allowing none but false and distorted views to reach it; is it not enough that you have the power of doing this, and that you exercise it, but must you also be so coarse, so cruel, and so cowardly to me?"

Still Mr. Pecksniff led her calmly on, and looked as mild as any lamb that ever pastured in the fields.

"Will nothing move you, sir!" cried Mary.

"My dear," observed Mr. Pecksniff, with a placid leer, "a habit of self-examination, and the practice of—shall I say of virtue?"

"Of hypocrisy," said Mary.

"No, no," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, chafing the captive hand reproachfully: "of virtue—have enabled me to set such guards upon myself, that it is really difficult to ruffle me. It is a curious fact, but it is difficult, do you know, for any one to ruffle me. And did she think," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a playful tightening of his grasp, "that *she* could! How little did she know his heart!"

Little indeed! Her mind was so strangely constituted that she would have preferred the caresses of a toad, an adder, or a serpent: nay, the hug of a bear: to the endearments of Mr. Pecksniff.

"Come, come," said that good gentleman, "a word or two will set this matter right, and establish a pleasant understanding between us. I am not angry, my love."

"You angry!"

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I am not. I say so. Neither are you."

There was a beating heart beneath his hand that told another story though.

"I am sure you are not," said Mr. Pecksniff: "and I will tell you why. There are two Martin Chuzzlewits, my dear; and your carry-

ing your anger to one might have a serious effect—who knows!—upon the other. You wouldn't wish to hurt him, would you!"

She trembled violently, and looked at him with such a proud disdain that he turned his eyes away. No doubt lest he should be offended with her in spite of his better self.

"A passive quarrel, my love," said Mr. Pecksniff, "may be changed into an active one, remember. It would be sad to blight even a disinherited young man in his already blighted prospects: but how easy to do it. Ah! how easy! *Have* I influence with our venerable friend, do you think? Well, perhaps I have. Perhaps I have."

He raised his eyes to hers; and nodded with an air of banter that was charming.

"No," he continued, thoughtfully. "Upon the whole, my sweet, if I were you, I'd keep my secret to myself. I am not at all sure: very far from it: that it would surprise our friend in any way, for he and I have had some conversation together only this morning, and he is anxious, very anxious, to establish you in some more settled manner. But whether he was surprised or not surprised, the consequence of your imparting it might be the same. Martin, junior, might suffer severely. I'd have compassion on Martin, junior, do you know?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with a persuasive smile. "Yes. He don't deserve it, but I would."

She wept so bitterly now, and was so much distressed, that he thought it prudent to unclasp her waist, and hold her only by the hand.

"As to our own share in the precious little mystery," said Mr. Pecksniff, "we will keep it to ourselves, and talk of it between ourselves, and you shall think it over. You will consent, my love; you will consent, I know. Whatever you may think; you will. I seem to remember to have heard: I really don't know where, or how:" he added, with bewitching frankness, "that you and Martin junior, when you were children, had a sort of childish fondness for each other. When we are married, you shall have the satisfaction of thinking that it didn't last, to ruin him, but passed away, to do him good; for we'll see then, what we can do to put some trifling help in Martin junior's way. *Have* I any influence with our venerable friend? Well! Perhaps I have. Perhaps I have."

The outlet from the wood in which these tender passages occurred, was close to Mr. Pecksniff's house. They were now so near it that he stopped, and holding up her little finger, said in playful accents, as a parting fancy:

"Shall I bite it?"

Receiving no reply he kissed it instead; and then stooping down, inclined his flabby face to hers—he had a flabby face, although he *was* a good man—and with a blessing, which from such a source was quite enough to set her up in life, and prosper her from that time forth, permitted her to leave him.

Gallantry in its true sense is supposed to ennoble and dignify a man; and love has shed refinements on innumerable Cymons. But Mr. Pecksniff: perhaps because to one of his exalted nature these were mere grossnesses: certainly did not appear to any unusual advantage, now that he was left alone. On the contrary, he seemed to be shrunk and reduced; to be trying to hide himself within himself; and to be wretched at not having the power to do it. His shoes looked too large; his sleeves looked too long; his hair looked too limp; his hat looked too little; his features looked too mean; his exposed throat looked as if a halter would have done it good. For a minute or two, in fact, he was hot, and pale, and mean, and shy, and slinking, and consequently not at all Pecksniffian. But after that, he recovered himself, and went home with as beneficent an air as if he had been the High Priest of the summer weather.

"I have arranged to go, Papa," said Charity, "to-morrow."

"So soon, my child!"

"I can't go too soon," said Charity, "under the circumstances. I have written to Mrs. Todgers to propose an arrangement, and have requested her to meet me at the coach, at all events. You'll be quite your own master now, Mr. Pinch!"

Mr. Pecksniff had just gone out of the room, and Tom had just come into it.

"My own master!" repeated Tom.

"Yes, you'll have nobody to interfere with you," said Charity. "At least I hope you won't. Hem! It's a changing world."

"What! are—are *you* going to be married, Miss Pecksniff?" asked Tom in great surprise.

"Not exactly," faltered Cherry. "I haven't made up my mind to be. I believe I could be if I chose, Mr. Pinch."

"Of course you could!" said Tom. And he said it in perfect good faith. He believed it from the bottom of his heart.

"No," said Cherry. "I am not going to be married. Nobody is, that I know of. Hem! But I am not going to live with Papa. I have my reasons, but it's all a secret. I shall always feel very kindly towards you, I assure you, for the boldness you showed that night. As to you and me, Mr. Pinch, *we* part the best friends possible!"

Tom thanked her for her confidence, and for her friendship, but there was a mystery in the former, which perfectly bewildered him. In his extravagant devotion to the family, he had felt the loss of Merry more than any one but those who knew that for all the slights he underwent he thought his own demerits were to blame, could possibly have understood. He had scarcely reconciled himself to that, when here was Charity about to leave them. She had grown up, as it were, under Tom's eye. The sisters were a part of Pecksniff, and a part of Tom; items in Pecksniff's goodness, and in Tom's service. He couldn't bear it: not two hours' sleep had Tom that night, through dwelling in his bed upon these dreadful changes.

When morning dawned, he thought he must have dreamed this piece of ambiguity; but no, on going down-stairs he found them packing trunks and cording boxes, and making other preparations for Miss Charity's departure, which lasted all day long. In good time for the evening-coach, Miss Charity deposited her house-keeping keys with much ceremony upon the parlour table; took a gracious leave of all the house; and quitted her paternal roof—a blessing for which the Pecksniffian servant was observed by some profane persons to be particularly active in the thanksgiving at church next Sunday.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MR. PINCH IS DISCHARGED OF A DUTY WHICH HE NEVER OWED TO ANYBODY; AND MR. PECKSNIFF DISCHARGES A DUTY WHICH HE OWES TO SOCIETY.



HE closing words of the last chapter lead naturally to the commencement of this, its successor; for it has to do with a church. With the church so often mentioned heretofore, in which Tom Pinch played the organ for nothing.

One sultry afternoon, about a week after Miss Charity's departure for London, Mr. Pecksniff being out walking by himself, took it into his head to stray into the churchyard. As he was lingering among the tombstones, endeavouring to extract an available sentiment or two from the epitaphs—for he never lost an opportunity of making up a few moral crackers, to be let off as occasion served—Tom Pinch began to practise. Tom could run down to the church and do so whenever he had time to spare; for it was a simple little organ, provided with wind

by the action of the musician's feet; and he was independent, even of a bellows-blower. Though if Tom had wanted one at any time, there was not a man or boy in all the village, and away to the turnpike (tollman included), but would have blown away for him till he was black in the face.

Mr. Pecksniff had no objection to music; not the least. He was tolerant of everything—he often said so. He considered it a vagabond kind of trifling, in general, just suited to Tom's capacity. But in regard to Tom's performance upon this same organ, he was remarkably lenient, singularly amiable: for when Tom played it on Sundays, Mr. Pecksniff in his unbounded sympathy felt as if he played it himself, and were a benefactor to the congregation. So whenever it was impossible to devise any other means of taking the value of Tom's wages out of him, Mr. Pecksniff gave him leave to cultivate this instrument. For which mark of his consideration, Tom was very grateful.

The afternoon was remarkably warm, and Mr. Pecksniff had been strolling a long way. He had not what may be called a fine ear for music, but he knew when it had a tranquillising influence on his soul; and that was the case now, for it sounded to him like a melodious snore. He approached the church, and looking through the diamond lattice of a window near the porch, saw Tom, with the curtains in the loft drawn back, playing away with great expression and tenderness.

The church had an inviting air of coolness. The old oak roof supported by cross-beams, the hoary walls, the marble tablets, and the cracked stone pavement, were refreshing to look at. There were leaves of ivy tapping gently at the opposite windows; and the sun poured in through only one: leaving the body of the church in tempting shade. But the most tempting spot of all, was one red-curtained and soft-cushioned pew, wherein the official dignitaries of the place (of whom Mr. Pecksniff was the head and chief) enshrined themselves on Sundays. Mr. Pecksniff's seat was in the corner: a remarkably comfortable corner: where his very large Prayer-Book was at that minute making the most of its quarto self upon the desk. He determined to go in and rest.

He entered very softly; in part because it was a church; in part because his tread was always soft; in part because Tom played a solemn tune; in part because he thought he would surprise him when he stopped. Unbolting the door of the high pew of state, he glided in and shut it after him; then sitting in his usual place, and stretching out his legs upon

the hassocks, he composed himself to listen to the music.

It is an unaccountable circumstance that he should have felt drowsy there, where the force of association might surely have been enough to keep him wide awake; but he did. He had not been in the snug little corner five minutes before he began to nod. He had not recovered himself one minute before he began to nod again. In the very act of opening his eyes indolently, he nodded again. In the very act of shutting them, he nodded again. So he fell out of one nod into another until at last he ceased to nod at all, and was as fast as the church itself.

He had a consciousness of the organ, long after he fell asleep, though as to its being an organ he had no more idea of that, than he had of its being a bull. After a while he began to have at intervals the same dreamy impressions of voices; and awakening to an indolent curiosity upon the subject, opened his eyes.

He was so indolent, that after glancing at the hassocks and the pew, he was already half-way off to sleep again, when it occurred to him that there really were voices in the church: low voices, talking earnestly hard by: while the echoes seemed to mutter responses. He roused himself, and listened.

Before he had listened half-a-dozen seconds, he became as broad awake as ever he had been in all his life. With eyes, and ears, and mouth, wide open, he moved himself a very little with the utmost caution, and gathering the curtain in his hand, peeped out.

Tom Pinch and Mary. Of course. He had recognised their voices, and already knew the topic they discussed. Looking like the small end of a guillotined man, with his chin on a level with the top of the pew, so that he might duck down immediately in case of either of them turning round, he listened. Listened with such concentrated eagerness, that his very hair and shirt-collar stood bristling up to help him.

"No," cried Tom. "No letters have ever reached me, except that one from New York. But don't be uneasy on that account, for it's very likely they have gone away to some far-off place, where the posts are neither regular nor frequent. He said in that very letter that it might be so, even in that city to which they thought of travelling—Eden, you know."

"It is a great weight upon my mind," said Mary.

"Oh, but you mustn't let it be," said Tom. "There's a true saying that nothing travels so fast as ill news; and if the slightest harm had

happened to Martin, you may be sure you would have heard of it long ago. I have often wished to say this to you," Tom continued with an embarrassment that became him very well, "but you have never given me an opportunity."

"I have sometimes been almost afraid," said Mary, "that you might suppose I hesitated to confide in you, Mr. Pinch."

"No," Tom stammered, "I—I am not aware that I ever supposed that. I am sure that if I have, I have checked the thought directly, as an injustice to you. I feel the delicacy of your

situation in having to confide in me at all," said Tom, "but I would risk my life to save you from one day's uneasiness: indeed I would!"

Poor Tom!

"I have dreaded sometimes," Tom continued, "that I might have displeased you by—by having the boldness to try and anticipate your wishes now and then. At other times I have fancied that your kindness prompted you to keep aloof from me."

"Indeed!"

"It was very foolish: very presumptuous and



"I SAY," CRIED TOM, IN GREAT EXCITEMENT, "HE IS A SCOUNDREL AND A VILLAIN! I DON'T CARE WHO HE IS, I SAY HE IS A DOUBLE-DYED AND MOST INTOLERABLE VILLAIN!"

ridiculous: to think so," Tom pursued: "but I feared you might suppose it possible that I—I—should admire you too much for my own peace; and so denied yourself the slight assistance you would otherwise have accepted from me. If such an idea has ever presented itself to you," faltered Tom, "pray dismiss it. I am easily made happy: and I shall live contented here long after you and Martin have forgotten me. I am a poor, shy, awkward creature: not at all a man of the world: and you should think no more of me, bless you, than if I were an old friar!"

If friars bear such hearts as thine, Tom, let friars multiply; though they have no such rule in all their stern arithmetic.

"Dear Mr. Pinch!" said Mary, giving him her hand; "I cannot tell you how your kindness moves me. I have never wronged you by the lightest doubt, and have never for an instant ceased to feel that you were all; much more than all; that Martin found you. Without the silent care and friendship I have experienced from you, my life here would have been unhappy. But you have been a good angel to me; filling me with gratitude of heart, hope, and courage."

"I am as little like an angel, I am afraid," replied Tom, shaking his head, "as any stone cherubim among the gravestones; and I don't think there are many real angels of *that* pattern. But I should like to know (if you will tell me) why you have been so very silent about Martin."

"Because I have been afraid," said Mary, "of injuring you."

"Of injuring me!" cried Tom.

"Of doing you an injury with your employer."

The gentleman in question dived.

"With Pecksniff!" rejoined Tom, with cheerful confidence. "Oh dear, he'd never think of us! He's the best of men. The more at ease you were, the happier he would be. Oh dear, you needn't be afraid of Pecksniff. He is not a spy."

Many a man in Mr. Pecksniff's place, if he could have dived through the floor of the pew of state and come out at Calcutta or any inhabited region on the other side of the earth, would have done it instantly. Mr. Pecksniff sat down upon a hassock, and listening more attentively than ever, smiled.

Mary seemed to have expressed some dissent in the meanwhile, for Tom went on to say, with honest energy:

"Well, I don't know how it is, but it always happens, whenever I express myself in this way, to anybody almost, that I find they won't do justice to Pecksniff. It is one of the most extraordinary circumstances that ever came within my knowledge, but it is so. There's John Westlock, who used to be a pupil here, one of the best-hearted young men in the world, in all other matters—I really believe John would have Pecksniff flogged at the cart's tail if he could. And John is not a solitary case, for every pupil we have had in my time has gone away with the same inveterate hatred of him. There was Mark Tapley, too, quite in another station of life," said Tom: "the mockery he used to make of Pecksniff when he was at the Dragon was shocking. Martin too: Martin was worse than any of 'em. But I forgot. He prepared you to dislike Pecksniff, of course. So you came with a prejudice, you know, Miss Graham, and are not a fair witness."

Tom triumphed very much in this discovery, and rubbed his hands with great satisfaction.

"Mr. Pinch," said Mary, "you mistake him."

"No, no!" cried Tom. "You mistake him. But," he added, with a rapid change in his tone, "what is the matter? Miss Graham, what is the matter?"

Mr. Pecksniff brought up to the top of the pew, by slow degrees, his hair, his forehead, his

eyebrow, his eye. She was sitting on a bench beside the door with her hands before her face; and Tom was bending over her.

"What is the matter!" cried Tom. "Have I said anything to hurt you? Has any one said anything to hurt you? Don't cry. Pray tell me what it is. I cannot bear to see you so distressed. Mercy on us, I never was so surprised and grieved in all my life!"

Mr. Pecksniff kept his eye in the same place. He could have moved it now for nothing short of a gimlet or a red-hot wire.

"I wouldn't have told you, Mr. Pinch," said Mary, "if I could have helped it; but your delusion is so absorbing, and it is so necessary that we should be upon our guard; that you should not be compromised; and to that end that you should know by whom I am beset; that no alternative is left me. I came here purposely to tell you, but I think I should have wanted courage if you had not chanced to lead me so directly to the object of my coming."

Tom gazed at her steadfastly, and seemed to say, "What else?" But he said not a word.

"That person whom you think the best of men," said Mary, looking up, and speaking with a quivering lip and flashing eye:

"Lord bless me!" muttered Tom, staggering back. "Wait a moment. That person whom I think the best of men! You mean Pecksniff, of course. Yes, I see you mean Pecksniff. Good gracious me, don't speak without authority. What has he done? If he is not the best of men, what is he?"

"The worst. The falsest, craftiest, meanest, cruellest, most sordid, most shameless," said the trembling girl—trembling with her indignation.

Tom sat down on a seat, and clasped his hands.

"What is he," said Mary, "who receiving me in his house as his guest: his unwilling guest: knowing my history, and how defenceless and alone I am, presumes before his daughters to affront me so, that if I had a brother but a child, who saw it, he would instinctively have helped me?"

"He is a scoundrel!" exclaimed Tom. "Whoever he may be, he is a scoundrel."

Mr. Pecksniff dived again.

"What is he," said Mary, "who, when my only friend: a dear and kind one too: was in full health of mind, humbled himself before him, but was spurned away (for he knew him then) like a dog. Who, in his forgiving spirit, now that that friend is sunk into a failing state,

can crawl about him again, and use the influence he basely gains, for every base and wicked purpose, and not for one—not one—that's true or good?"

"I say he is a scoundrel," answered Tom.

"But what is he: oh Mr. Pinch, what *is* he: who, thinking he could compass these designs the better if I were his wife, assails me with the coward's argument that if I marry him, Martin, on whom I have brought so much misfortune, shall be restored to something of his former hopes; and if I do not, shall be plunged in deeper ruin? What is he who makes my very constancy to one I love with all my heart a torture to myself and wrong to him; who makes me, do what I will, the instrument to hurt a head I would heap blessings on! What is he who, winding all these cruel snares about me, explains their purpose to me, with a smooth tongue and a smiling face, in the broad light of day: dragging me on, the while, in his embrace, and holding to his lips a hand," pursued the agitated girl, extending it, "which I would have struck off, if with it I could lose the shame and degradation of his touch?"

"I say," cried Tom, in great excitement, "he is a scoundrel and a villain. I don't care who he is, I say he is a double-dyed and most intolerable villain!"

Covering her face with her hands again, as if the passion which had sustained her through these disclosures lost itself in an overwhelming sense of shame and grief, she abandoned herself to tears.

Any sight of distress was sure to move the tenderness of Tom, but this especially. Tears and sobs from her, were arrows in his heart. He tried to comfort her; sat down beside her; expended all his store of homely eloquence; and spoke in words of praise and hope of Martin. Ay, though he loved her from his soul with such a self-denying love as woman seldom wins: he spoke from first to last of Martin. Not the wealth of the rich Indies would have tempted Tom to shirk one mention of her lover's name.

When she was more composed, she impressed upon Tom that this man she had described, was Pecksniff in his real colours; and word by word and phrase by phrase, as well as she remembered it, related what had passed between them in the wood: which was no doubt a source of high gratification to that gentleman himself, who in his desire to see and his dread of being seen, was constantly diving down into the state pew, and coming up again like the intelligent householder in Punch's Show, who avoids being

knocked on the head with a cudgel. When she had concluded her account, and had besought Tom to be very distant and unconscious in his manner towards her after this explanation, and had thanked him very much, they parted on the alarm of footsteps in the burial-ground; and Tom was left alone in the church again.

And now the full agitation and misery of the disclosure, came rushing upon Tom indeed. The star of his whole life from boyhood, had become, in a moment, putrid vapour. It was not that Pecksniff, Tom's Pecksniff, had ceased to exist, but that he never had existed. In his death, Tom would have had the comfort of remembering what he used to be, but in this discovery, he had the anguish of recollecting what he never was. For as Tom's blindness in this matter had been total and not partial, so was his restored sight. *His* Pecksniff could never have worked the wickedness of which he had just now heard, but any other Pecksniff could; and the Pecksniff who could do that, could do anything, and no doubt had been doing anything and everything except the right thing, all through his career. From the lofty height on which poor Tom had placed his idol it was tumbled down headlong, and

Not all the king's horses nor all the king's men
Could have set Mr. Pecksniff up again.

Legions of Titans couldn't have got him out of the mud; and serve him right! But it was not he who suffered; it was Tom. His compass was broken, his chart destroyed, his chronometer had stopped, his masts were gone by the board; his anchor was adrift, ten thousand leagues away.

Mr. Pecksniff watched him with a lively interest, for he divined the purpose of Tom's ruminations, and was curious to see how he conducted himself. For some time Tom wandered up and down the aisle like a man demented, stopping occasionally to lean against a pew and think it over; then he stood staring at a blank old monument bordered tastefully with skulls and cross-bones, as if it were the finest work of Art he had ever seen, although at other times he held it in unspeakable contempt; then he sat down; then walked to and fro again; then went wandering up into the organ-loft, and touched the keys. But their minstrelsy was changed, their music gone; and sounding one long melancholy chord, Tom drooped his head upon his hands and gave it up as hopeless.

"I wouldn't have cared," said Tom Pinch, rising from his stool, and looking down into the church as if he had been the Clergyman, "I

wouldn't have cared for anything he might have done to Me, for I have tried his patience often, and have lived upon his sufferance, and have never been the help to him that others could have been. I wouldn't have minded, Pecksniff," Tom continued, little thinking who heard him, "if you had done Me any wrong; I could have found plenty of excuses for that; and though you might have hurt me, could have still gone on respecting you. But why did you ever fall so low as this in my esteem! Oh Pecksniff, Pecksniff, there is nothing I would not have given, to have had you deserve my old opinion of you; nothing!"

Mr. Pecksniff sat upon the hassock pulling up his shirt-collar, while Tom, touched to the quick, delivered this apostrophe. After a pause he heard Tom coming down the stairs, jingling the church keys; and bringing his eye to the top of the pew again, saw him go slowly out and lock the door.

Mr. Pecksniff durst not issue from his place of concealment; for through the windows of the church, he saw Tom passing on among the graves, and sometimes stopping at a stone, and leaning there, as if he were a mourner who had lost a friend. Even when he had left the churchyard, Mr. Pecksniff still remained shut up: not being at all secure but that in his restless state of mind Tom might come wandering back. At length he issued forth, and walked with a pleasant countenance into the vestry; where he knew there was a window near the ground, by which he could release himself by merely stepping out.

He was in a curious frame of mind, Mr. Pecksniff: being in no hurry to go, but rather inclining to a dilatory trifling with the time, which prompted him to open the vestry cupboard, and look at himself in the parson's little glass that hung within the door. Seeing that his hair was rumpled, he took the liberty of borrowing the canonical brush and arranging it. He also took the liberty of opening another cupboard; but he shut it up again quickly, being rather startled by the sight of a black and a white surplice dangling against the wall; which had very much the appearance of two curates who had committed suicide by hanging themselves. Remembering that he had seen in the first cupboard a port-wine bottle and some biscuits, he peeped into it again, and helped himself with much deliberation: cogitating all the time though, in a very deep and weighty manner, as if his thoughts were otherwise employed.

He soon made up his mind, if it had ever been in doubt; and putting back the bottle and

biscuits, opened the case ment. He got out into the churchyard without any difficulty; shut the window after him; and walked straight home.

"Is Mr. Pinch in-doors?" asked Mr. Pecksniff of his serving-maid.

"Just come in, sir."

"Just come in, eh?" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, cheerfully. "And gone up-stairs, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir. Gone up-stairs. Shall I call him, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "no. You needn't call him, Jane. Thank you, Jane. How are your relations, Jane?"

"Pretty well, I thank you, sir."

"I am glad to hear it. Let them know I asked about them, Jane. Is Mr. Chuzzlewit in the way, Jane?"

"Yes, sir. He's in the parlour, reading."

"He's in the parlour, reading, is he, Jane?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Very well. Then I think I'll go and see him, Jane."

Never had Mr. Pecksniff been beheld in a more pleasant humour!

But when he walked into the parlour where the old man was engaged as Jane had said; with pen and ink and paper on a table close at hand (for Mr. Pecksniff was always very particular to have him well supplied with writing materials); he became less cheerful. He was not angry, he was not vindictive, he was not cross, he was not moody, but he was grieved: he was sorely grieved. As he sat down by the old man's side, two tears: not tears like those with which recording angels blot their entries out, but drops so precious that they use them for their ink: stole down his meritorious cheeks.

"What is the matter?" asked old Martin. "Pecksniff, what ails you, man?"

"I am sorry to interrupt you, my dear sir, and I am still more sorry for the cause. My good, my worthy friend, I am deceived."

"You are deceived!"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, in an agony, "deceived in the tenderest point. Cruelly deceived in that quarter, sir, in which I placed the most unbounded confidence. Deceived, Mr. Chuzzlewit, by Thomas Pinch."

"Oh! bad, bad, bad!" said Martin, laying down his book. "Very bad! I hope not. Are you certain?"

"Certain, my good sir! My eyes and ears are witnesses. I wouldn't have believed it otherwise. I wouldn't have believed it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, if a Fiery Serpent had proclaimed it from the top of Salisbury Cathedral. I would have said," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "that the Serpent lied."

Such was my faith in Thomas Pinch, that I would have cast the falsehood back into the Serpent's teeth, and would have taken Thomas to my heart. But I am not a Serpent, sir, myself, I grieve to say, and no excuse or hope is left me."

Martin was greatly disturbed to see him so much agitated, and to hear such unexpected news. He begged him to compose himself, and asked upon what subject Mr. Pinch's treachery had been developed.

"That is almost the worst of all, sir," Mr. Pecksniff answered. "On a subject nearly concerning *you*. Oh! is it not enough," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking upward, "that these blows must fall on me, but must they also hit my friends!"

"You alarm me," cried the old man, changing colour. "I am not so strong as I was. You terrify me, Pecksniff!"

"Cheer up, my noble sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking courage, "and we will do what is required of us. You shall know all, sir, and shall be righted. But first excuse me, sir, excuse me. I have a duty to discharge, which I owe to society."

He rang the bell, and Jane appeared.

"Send Mr. Pinch here, if you please, Jane!"

Tom came. Constrained and altered in his manner, downcast and dejected, visibly confused; not liking to look Pecksniff in the face.

The honest man bestowed a glance on Mr. Chuzzlewit, as who should say "You see!" and addressed himself to Tom in these terms:

"Mr. Pinch, I have left the vestry-window unfastened. Will you do me the favour to go and secure it; then bring the keys of the sacred edifice to me!"

"The vestry-window, sir?" cried Tom.

"You understand me, Mr. Pinch, I think," returned his patron. "Yes, Mr. Pinch, the vestry-window. I grieve to say that sleeping in the church after a fatiguing ramble, I overheard just now some fragments," he emphasised that word, "of a dialogue between two parties; and one of them locking the church when he went out, I was obliged to leave it myself by the vestry-window. Do me the favour to secure that vestry-window, Mr. Pinch, and then come back to me."

No physiognomist that ever dwelt on earth could have construed Tom's face when he heard these words. Wonder was in it, and a mild look of reproach, but certainly no fear or guilt, although a host of strong emotions struggled to display themselves. He bowed, and without saying one word, good or bad, withdrew.

"Pecksniff," cried Martin, in a tremble, "what does all this mean? You are not going to do anything in haste, you may regret!"

"No, my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, firmly. "No. But I have a duty to discharge which I owe to society; and it shall be discharged, my friend, at any cost!"

Oh late-remembered, much-forgotten, mousing, braggart duty, always owed, and seldom paid in any other coin than punishment and wrath, when will mankind begin to know thee! When will men acknowledge thee in thy neglected cradle, and thy stunted youth, and not begin their recognition in thy sinful manhood and thy desolate old age! Oh ermined Judge whose duty to society is, now, to doom the ragged criminal to punishment and death, hadst thou never, Man, a duty to discharge in barring up the hundred open gates that wooed him to the felon's dock, and throwing but ajar the portals to a decent life! Oh prelate, prelate, whose duty to society it is to mourn in melancholy phrase the sad degeneracy of these bad times in which thy lot of honours has been cast, did nothing go before thy elevation to the lofty seat, from which thou dealest out thy homilies to other carriers for dead men's shoes, whose duty to society has not begun! Oh magistrate, so rare a country gentleman and brave a squire, had you no duty to society, before the ricks were blazing and the mob were mad; or did it spring up, armed and booted from the earth, a corps of yeomanry full-grown!

Mr. Pecksniff's duty to society could not be paid till Tom came back. The interval which preceded the return of that young man, he occupied in a close conference with his friend; so that when Tom did arrive, he found the two quite ready to receive him. Mary was in her own room above, whither Mr. Pecksniff, always considerate, had besought old Martin to entreat her to remain some half-hour longer, that her feelings might be spared.

When Tom came back, he found old Martin sitting by the window, and Mr. Pecksniff in an imposing attitude at the table. On one side of him was his pocket-handkerchief; and on the other a little heap (a very little heap) of gold and silver, and odd pence. Tom saw, at a glance, that it was his own salary for the current quarter.

"Have you fastened the vestry-window, Mr. Pinch?" said Pecksniff.

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you. Put down the keys if you please, Mr. Pinch."

Tom placed them on the table. He held the

bunch by the key of the organ-loft (though it was one of the smallest) and looked hard at it as he laid it down. It had been an old, old friend of Tom's; a kind companion to him, many and many a day.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, shaking his head: "Oh Mr. Pinch! I wonder you can look me in the face!"

Tom did it though: and notwithstanding that he has been described as stooping generally, he stood as upright then as man could stand.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, taking up his handkerchief, as if he felt that he should want it soon, "I will not dwell upon the past. I will spare you, and I will spare myself, that pain at least."

Tom's was not a very bright eye, but it was a very expressive one when he looked at Mr. Pecksniff, and said:

"Thank you, sir. I am very glad you will not refer to the past."

"The present is enough," said Mr. Pecksniff, dropping a penny, "and the sooner *that* is past, the better. Mr. Pinch, I will not dismiss you without a word of explanation. Even such a course would be quite justifiable under the circumstances; but it might wear an appearance of hurry, and I will not do it; for I am," said Mr. Pecksniff, knocking down another penny, "perfectly self-possessed. Therefore I will say to you, what I have already said to Mr. Chuzzlewit."

Tom glanced at the old gentleman, who nodded now and then as approving of Mr. Pecksniff's sentences and sentiments, but interposed between them in no other way.

"From fragments of a conversation which I overheard in the church, just now, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, "between yourself and Miss Graham—I say fragments, because I was slumbering at a considerable distance from you, when I was roused by your voices—and from what I saw, I ascertained (I would have given a good deal not to have ascertained, Mr. Pinch) that you, forgetful of all ties of duty and of honour, sir; regardless of the sacred laws of hospitality, to which you were pledged as an inmate of this house; have presumed to address Miss Graham with unreturned professions of attachment and proposals of love."

Tom looked at him steadily.

"Do you deny it, sir?" asked Mr. Pecksniff, dropping one pound two and fourpence, and making a great business of picking it up again.

"No, sir," replied Tom. "I do not."

"You do not," said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing at the old gentleman. "Oblige me by count-

ing this money, Mr. Pinch, and putting your name to this receipt. You do not?"

No, Tom did not. He scorned to deny it. He saw that Mr. Pecksniff having overheard his own disgrace, cared not a jot for sinking lower yet in his contempt. He saw that he had devised this fiction as the readiest means of getting rid of him at once, but that it must end in that any way. He saw that Mr. Pecksniff reckoned on his not denying it, because his doing so and explaining would incense the old man more than ever against Martin, and against Mary: while Pecksniff himself would only have been mistaken in his "fragments." Deny it! No.

"You find the amount correct, do you, Mr. Pinch?" said Pecksniff.

"Quite correct, sir," answered Tom.

"A person is waiting in the kitchen," said Mr. Pecksniff, "to carry your luggage wherever you please. We part, Mr. Pinch, at once, and are strangers from this time."

Something without a name; compassion, sorrow, old tenderness, mistaken gratitude, habit: none of these, and yet all of them; smote upon Tom's gentle heart at parting. There was no such soul as Pecksniff's in that carcase; and yet, though his speaking out had not involved the compromise of one he loved, he couldn't have denounced the very shape and figure of the man. Not even then.

"I will not say," cried Mr. Pecksniff, shedding tears, "what a blow this is. I will not say how much it tries me; how it works upon my nature; how it grates upon my feelings. I do not care for that. I can endure as well as another man. But what I have to hope, and what you have to hope, Mr. Pinch (otherwise a great responsibility rests upon you), is, that this deception may not alter my ideas of humanity; that it may not impair my freshness, or contract, if I may use the expression, my Pinions. I hope it will not; I don't think it will. It may be a comfort to you, if not now, at some future time, to know that I shall endeavour not to think the worse of my fellow-creatures in general, for what has passed between us. Farewell."

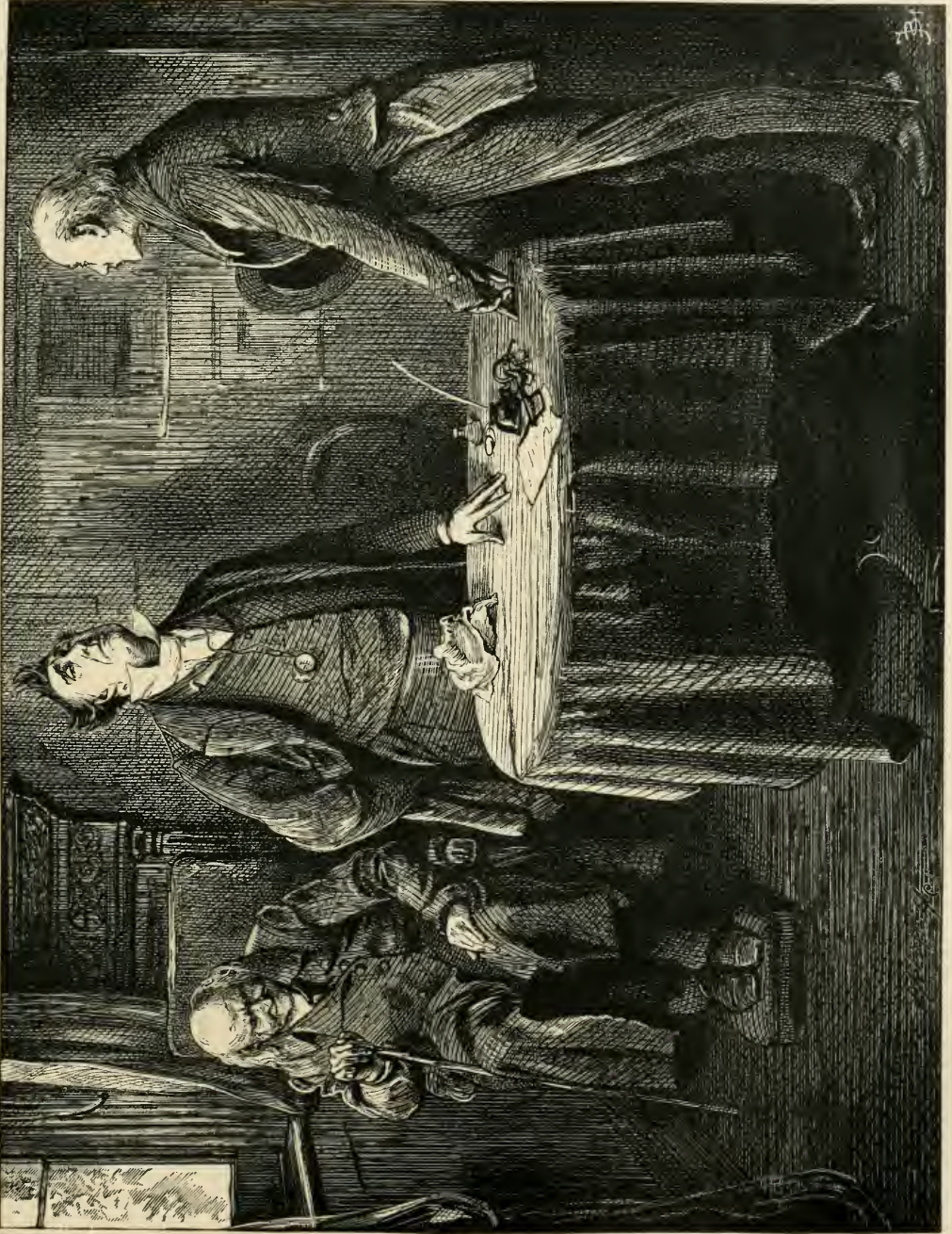
Tom had meant to spare him one little punctuation with a lancet, which he had it in his power to administer, but he changed his mind on hearing this, and said:

"I think you left something in the church, sir."

"Thank you, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "I am not aware that I did."

"This is your double eye-glass, I believe?" said Tom.

"Oh!" cried Pecksniff, with some degree of



"MR. PINCH," SAID MR. PECKSNIP, SHAKING HIS HEAD. "OH, MR. PINCH! I WONDER HOW YOU CAN LOOK ME IN THE FACE!"

confusion. "I am obliged to you. Put it down if you please."

"I found it," said Tom slowly—"when I went to bolt the vestry window—in the Pew."

So he had. Mr. Pecksniff had taken it off when he was bobbing up and down, lest it should strike against the panelling: and had forgotten it. Going back to the church with his mind full of having been watched, and wondering very much from what part, Tom's attention was caught by the door of the state pew standing open. Looking into it he found the glass. And thus he knew, and by returning it gave Mr. Pecksniff the information that he knew, where the listener had been; and that instead of overhearing fragments of the conversation, he must have rejoiced in every word of it.

"I'm glad he's gone," said Martin, drawing a long breath when Tom had left the room.

"It is a relief," assented Mr. Pecksniff. "It is a great relief. But having discharged—I hope with tolerable firmness—the duty which I owed to society, I will now, my dear sir, if you will give me leave, retire to shed a few tears in the back garden, as an humble individual."

Tom went up-stairs; cleared his shelf of books: packed them up with his music and an old fiddle in his trunk; got out his clothes (they were not so many that they made his head ache); put them on the top of his books; and went into the work-room for his case of instruments. There was a ragged stool there, with the horsehair all sticking out of the top like a wig: a very Beast of a stool in itself: on which he had taken up his daily seat, year after year, during the whole period of his service. They had grown older and shabbier in company. Pupils had served their time; seasons had come and gone; Tom and the worn-out stool had held together through it all. That part of the room was traditionally called "Tom's Corner." It had been assigned to him at first because of its being situated in a strong draught, and a great way from the fire; and he had occupied it ever since. There were portraits of him on the wall, with all his weak points monstrously portrayed. Diabolical sentiments, foreign to his character, were represented as issuing from his mouth in fat balloons. Every pupil had added something, even unto fancy portraits of his father with one eye, and of his mother with a disproportionate nose, and especially of his sister: who always being presented as extremely beautiful, made full amends to Tom for any other joke. Under less uncommon circumstances, it would have cut Tom to the heart to leave these things, and think that he saw them for the last

time; but it didn't now. There was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and all his other griefs were swallowed up in that.

So when he returned into the bed-room, and, having fastened his box and a carpet bag, put on his walking gaiters, and his great coat, and his hat, and taken his stick in his hand, looked round it for the last time. Early on summer mornings, and by the light of private candle-ends on winter nights, he had read himself half blind in this same room. He had tried in this same room to learn the fiddle under the bed-clothes, but yielding to objections from the other pupils, had reluctantly abandoned the design. At any other time he would have parted from it with a pang, thinking of all he had learned there, of the many hours he had passed there: for the love of his very dreams. But there was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and the unreality of Pecksniff extended itself to the chamber, in which, sitting on one particular bed, the thing supposed to be that Great Abstraction had often preached morality with such effect, that Tom had felt a moisture in his eyes, while hanging breathless on the words.

The man engaged to bear his box—Tom knew him well: a Dragon man—came stamping up the stairs, and made a roughish bow to Tom (to whom in common times he would have nodded with a grin) as though he were aware of what had happened, and wished him to perceive it made no difference in *him*. It was clumsily done; he was a mere waterer of horses; but Tom liked the man for it, and felt it more than going away.

Tom would have helped him with the box, but he made no more of it, though it was a heavy one, than an elephant would have made of a castle: just swinging it on his back and bowling down-stairs as if, being naturally a heavy sort of fellow, he could carry a box infinitely better than he could go alone. Tom took the carpet-bag, and went down-stairs along with him. At the outer door stood Jane, crying with all her might; and on the steps was Mrs. Lupin, sobbing bitterly, and putting out her hand for Tom to shake.

"You're coming to the Dragon, Mr. Pinch?"

"No," said Tom, "no. I shall walk to Salisbury to-night. I couldn't stay here. For goodness' sake, don't make me so unhappy, Mrs. Lupin."

"But you will come to the Dragon, Mr. Pinch. If it's only for to-night. To see me, you know: not as a traveller."

"God bless my soul!" said Tom, wiping his

eyes. "The kindness of people is enough to break one's heart! I mean to go to Salisbury to-night, my dear good creature. If you'll take care of my box for me, till I write for it, I shall consider it the greatest kindness you can do me."

"I wish," cried Mrs. Lupin, "there were twenty boxes, Mr. Pinch, that I might have 'em all."

"Thank'ee," said Tom. "It's like you. Good-bye. Good-bye."

There were several people, young and old, standing about the door, some of whom cried with Mrs. Lupin; while others tried to keep up a stout heart as Tom did; and others were absorbed in admiration of Mr. Pecksniff—a man who could build a church, as one may say, by squinting at a sheet of paper; and others were divided between that feeling, and sympathy with Tom. Mr. Pecksniff had appeared on the top of the steps, simultaneously with his old pupil, and while Tom was talking with Mrs. Lupin kept his hand stretched out, as though he said "Go forth!" When Tom went forth, and had turned the corner, Mr. Pecksniff shook his head, shut his eyes, and heaving a deep sigh, shut the door. On which, the best of Tom's supporters said he must have done some dreadful deed, or such a man as Mr. Pecksniff never could have felt like that. If it had been a common quarrel (they observed) he would have said something, but when he didn't, Mr. Pinch must have shocked him dreadfully.

Tom was out of hearing of their shrewd opinions, and plodded on as steadily as he could go, until he came within sight of the turnpike where the tollman's family had cried out "Mr. Pinch!" that frosty morning, when he went to meet young Martin. He had got through the village, and this tollbar was his last trial; but when the infant toll-takers came screeching out, he had half a mind to run for it, and make a bolt across the country.

"Why deary Mr. Pinch! oh deary sir!" exclaimed the tollman's wife. "What an unlikely time for you to be a going this way with a bag!"

"I am going to Salisbury," said Tom.

"Why, goodness, where's the gig then?" cried the tollman's wife, looking down the road, as if she thought Tom might have been upset without observing it.

"I haven't got it," said Tom. "I—" he couldn't evade it; he felt she would have him in the next question, if he got over this one. "I have left Mr. Pecksniff."

The tollman—a crusty customer, always smoking solitary pipes in a Windsor chair, inside, set artfully between two little windows that

looked up and down the road, so that when he saw anything coming up, he might hug himself on having toll to take, and when he saw it going down, might hug himself on having taken it—the tollman was out in an instant.

"Left Mr. Pecksniff!" cried the tollman.

"Yes," said Tom, "left him."

The tollman looked at his wife, uncertain whether to ask her if she had anything to suggest, or to order her to mind the children. Astonishment making him surly, he preferred the latter, and sent her into the toll-house with a flea in her ear.

"You left Mr. Pecksniff!" cried the tollman, folding his arms and spreading his legs. "I should as soon have thought of his head leaving him."

"Ay!" said Tom, "so should I, yesterday. Good night!"

If a heavy drove of oxen hadn't come by, immediately, the tollman would have gone down to the village straight to inquire into it. As things turned out, he smoked another pipe, and took his wife into his confidence. But their united sagacity could make nothing of it, and they went to bed—metaphorically—in the dark. But several times that night, when a waggon or other vehicle came through, and the driver asked the tollkeeper "What news?" he looked at the man by the light of his lantern, to assure himself that he had an interest in the subject, and then said, wrapping his watch-coat round his legs:

"You've heerd of Mr. Pecksniff down yonder?"

"Ah! sure-ly!"

"And of his young man Mr. Pinch p'raps?"

"Ah!"

"They've parted."

After every one of these disclosures, the tollman plunged into his house again, and was seen no more, while the other side went on, in great amazement.

But this was long after Tom was abed, and Tom was now with his face towards Salisbury, doing his best to get there. The evening was beautiful at first, but it became cloudy and dull at sunset, and the rain fell heavily soon afterwards. For ten long miles he plodded on, wet through, until at last the lights appeared, and he came into the welcome precincts of the city.

He went to the inn where he had waited for Martin, and briefly answering their inquiries after Mr. Pecksniff, ordered a bed. He had no heart for tea or supper, meat or drink of any kind, but sat by himself before an empty table in the public room while the bed was getting

ready, revolving in his mind all that had happened that eventful day, and wondering what he could or should do for the future. It was a great relief when the chambermaid came in, and said the bed was ready.

It was a low four-poster shelving downward in the centre like a trough, and the room was crowded with impracticable tables and exploded chests of drawers, full of damp linen. A graphic representation in oil of a remarkably fat ox hung over the fireplace, and the portrait of some former landlord (who might have been the ox's brother,

he was so like him), stared roundly in, at the foot of the bed. A variety of queer smells were partially quenched in the prevailing scent of very old lavender; and the window had not been opened for such a long space of time, that it pleaded immemorial usage, and wouldn't come open now.

These were trifles in themselves, but they added to the strangeness of the place, and did not induce Tom to forget his new position. Pecksniff had gone out of the world—had never been in it—and it was as much as Tom could do to say his prayers without him. But he felt



“ON THE FOURTEENTH NIGHT, HE KISSED MISS PECKSNIFF’S SNUFFERS, IN THE PASSAGE, WHEN SHE WENT UP-STAIRS TO BED: MEANING TO HAVE KISSED HER HAND, BUT MISSING IT.”

happier afterwards, and went to sleep and dreamed about him as he Never Was.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TREATS OF TODGERS'S AGAIN; AND OF ANOTHER BLIGHTED PLANT BESIDES THE PLANTS UPON THE LEADS.

EARLY on the day next after that on which she bade adieu to the halls of her youth
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 17.

and the scenes of her childhood, Miss Pecksniff, arriving safely at the coach-office in London, was there received, and conducted to her peaceful home beneath the shadow of the Monument, by Mrs. Todgers. M. Todgers looked a little worn by cares of gray and other such solitudes arising out of her establishment, but displayed her usual earnestness and warmth of manner.

“And how, my sweet Miss Pecksniff,” said she, “how is your princely pa?”

Miss Pecksniff signified (in confidence) that he contemplated the introduction of a princely ma; and repeated the sentiment that she wasn't blind, and wasn't quite a fool, and wouldn't bear it.

Mrs. Todgers was more shocked by the intelligence than any one could have expected. She was quite bitter. She said there was no truth in man, and that the warmer he expressed himself, as a general principle, the falsier and more treacherous he was. She foresaw with astonishing clearness that the object of Mr. Pecksniff's attachment was designing, worthless, and wicked; and receiving from Charity the fullest confirmation of these views, protested with tears in her eyes that she loved Miss Pecksniff like a sister, and felt her injuries as if they were her own.

"Your real darling sister I have not seen more than once since her marriage," said Mrs. Todgers, "and then I thought her looking poorly. My sweet Miss Pecksniff, I always thought that you was to be the lady?"

"Oh dear no!" cried Cherry, shaking her head. "Oh no, Mrs. Todgers. Thank you. No! not for any consideration he could offer."

"I dare say you are right," said Mrs. Todgers, with a sigh. "I feared it all along. But the misery we have had from that match, here among ourselves, in this house, my dear Miss Pecksniff, nobody would believe."

"Lor, Mrs. Todgers!"

"Awful, awful!" repeated Mrs. Todgers, with strong emphasis. "You recollect our youngest gentleman, my dear?"

"Of course I do," said Cherry.

"You might have observed," said Mrs. Todgers, "how he used to watch your sister; and that a kind of stony dumbness came over him whenever she was in company?"

"I am sure I never saw anything of the sort," said Cherry, in a peevish manner. "What nonsense, Mrs. Todgers!"

"My dear," returned that lady in a hollow voice, "I have seen him again and again, sitting over his pie at dinner, with his spoon a perfect fixture in his mouth, looking at your sister. I have seen him standing in a corner of our drawing-room, gazing at her, in such a lonely, melancholy state, that he was more like a Pump than a man, and might have drawn tears."

"I never saw it!" cried Cherry; "that's all I can say."

"But when the marriage took place," said Mrs. Todgers, proceeding with her subject, "when it was in the paper and was read out here at breakfast, I thought he had taken leave of his senses, I did indeed. The violence of

that young man, my dear Miss Pecksniff; the frightful opinions he expressed upon the subject of self-destruction; the extraordinary actions he performed with his tea; the clenching way in which he bit his bread and butter; the manner in which he taunted Mr. Jinkins; all combined to form a picture never to be forgotten."

"It's a pity he didn't destroy himself, I think," observed Miss Pecksniff.

"Himself!" said Mrs. Todgers, "it took another turn at night. He was for destroying other people then. There was a little chaffing going on—I hope you don't consider that a low expression, Miss Pecksniff; it is always in our gentlemen's mouths—a little chaffing going on, my dear, among 'em, all in good nature, when suddenly he rose up, foaming with his fury, and but for being held by three, would have had Mr. Jinkins's life with a boot-jack."

Miss Pecksniff's face expressed supreme indifference.

"And now," said Mrs. Todgers, "now he is the meekest of men. You can almost bring the tears into his eyes by looking at him. He sits with me the whole day long on Sundays, talking in such a dismal way that I find it next to impossible to keep my spirits up equal to the accommodation of the boarders. His only comfort is in female society. He takes me half-price to the play, to an extent which I sometimes fear is beyond his means; and I see the tears a standing in his eyes during the whole performance: particularly if it is anything of a comic nature. The turn I experienced only yesterday," said Mrs. Todgers, putting her hand to her side, "when the housemaid threw his bedside carpet out of the window of his room, while I was sitting here, no one can imagine. I thought it was him, and that he had done it at last."

The contempt with which Miss Charity received this pathetic account of the state to which the youngest gentleman in company was reduced, did not say much for her power of sympathising with that unfortunate character. She treated it with great levity, and went on to inform herself, then and afterwards, whether any other changes had occurred in the commercial boarding-house.

Mr. Bailey was gone, and had been succeeded (such is the decay of human greatness!) by an old woman whose name was reported to be Tamaroo—which seemed an impossibility. Indeed it appeared in the fulness of time that the jocular boarders had appropriated the word from an English ballad, in which it is supposed to express the bold and fiery nature of a certain hackney-coachman; and that it was bestowed

upon Mr. Bailey's successor by reason of her having nothing fiery about her, except an occasional attack of that fire which is called St. Anthony's. This ancient female had been engaged, in fulfilment of a vow, registered by Mrs. Todgers, that no more boys should darken the commercial doors; and she was chiefly remarkable for a total absence of all comprehension upon every subject whatever. She was a perfect Tomb for messages and small parcels; and when despatched to the Post-office with letters, had been frequently seen endeavouring to insinuate them into casual chinks in private doors, under the delusion that any door with a hole in it would answer the purpose. She was a very little old woman, and always wore a very coarse apron with a bib before and a loop behind, together with bandages on her wrists, which appeared to be afflicted with an everlasting sprain. She was on all occasions chary of opening the street-door, and ardent to shut it again; and she waited at table in a bonnet.

This was the only great change over and above the change which had fallen on the youngest gentleman. As for him, he more than corroborated the account of Mrs. Todgers; possessing greater sensibility than even she had given him credit for. He entertained some terrible notions of Destiny, among other matters, and talked much about people's "Missions:" upon which he seemed to have some private information not generally attainable, as he knew it had been poor Merry's mission to crush him in the bud. He was very frail, and tearful; for being aware that a shepherd's mission was to pipe to his flocks, and that a boatswain's mission was to pipe all hands, and that one man's mission was to be a paid piper, and another man's mission was to pay the piper, so he had got it into his head that his own peculiar mission was to pipe his eye. Which he did perpetually.

He often informed Mrs. Todgers that the sun had set upon him; that the billows had rolled over him; that the Car of Juggernaut had crushed him; and also that the deadly Upas tree of Java had blighted him. His name was Moddle.

Towards this most unhappy Moddle, Miss Pecksniff conducted herself at first with distant haughtiness, being in no humour to be entertained with dirges in honour of her married sister. The poor young gentleman was additionally crushed by this, and remonstrated with Mrs. Todgers on the subject.

"Even she turns from me, Mrs. Todgers," said Moddle.

"Then why don't you try and be a little bit more cheerful, sir?" retorted Mrs. Todgers.

"Cheerful, Mrs. Todgers! cheerful!" cried the youngest gentleman: "when she reminds me of days for ever fled, Mrs. Todgers!"

"Then you had better avoid her for a short time, if she does," said Mrs. Todgers, "and come to know her again, by degrees. That's my advice."

"But I can't avoid her," replied Moddle. "I haven't strength of mind to do it. Oh, Mrs. Todgers, if you knew what a comfort her nose is to me!"

"Her nose, sir!" Mrs. Todgers cried.

"Her profile, in general," said the youngest gentleman, "but particularly her nose. It's so like;" here he yielded to a burst of grief; "it's so like hers who is Another's, Mrs. Todgers!"

The observant matron did not fail to report this conversation to Charity, who laughed at the time, but treated Mr. Moddle that very evening with increased consideration, and presented her side-face to him as much as possible. Mr. Moddle was not less sentimental than usual; was rather more so, if anything; but he sat and stared at her with glistening eyes, and seemed grateful.

"Well, sir!" said the lady of the Boarding-House next day, "you held up your head last night. You're coming round, I think."

"Only because she's so like her who is Another's, Mrs. Todgers," rejoined the youth. "When she talks, and when she smiles, I think I'm looking on HER brow again, Mrs. Todgers."

This was likewise carried to Charity, who talked and smiled next evening in her most engaging manner, and rallying Mr. Moddle on the lowness of his spirits, challenged him to play a rubber at cribbage. Mr. Moddle taking up the gauntlet, they played several rubbers for sixpences, and Charity won them all. This may have been partially attributable to the gallantry of the youngest gentleman, but it was certainly referable to the state of his feelings also; for his eyes being frequently dimmed by tears, he thought that aces were tens, and knaves queens, which at times occasioned some confusion in his play.

On the seventh night of cribbage, when Mrs. Todgers, sitting by, proposed that instead of gambling they should play for "love," Mr. Moddle was seen to change colour. On the fourteenth night, he kissed Miss Pecksniff's snuffers, in the passage, when she went up-stairs to bed: meaning to have kissed her hand, but missing it.

In short, Mr. Moddle began to be impressed

with the idea that Miss Pecksniff's mission was to comfort him; and Miss Pecksniff began to speculate on the probability of its being her mission to become ultimately Mrs. Moddle. He was a young gentleman (Miss Pecksniff was not a very young lady) with rising prospects, and "almost" enough to live on. Really it looked very well.

Besides—besides—he had been regarded as devoted to Merry. Merry had joked about him, and had once spoken of it to her sister as a conquest. He was better looking, better shaped, better spoken, better tempered, better mannered than Jonas. He was easy to manage, could be made to consult the humours of his Betrothed, and could be shown off like a lamb when Jonas was a bear. There was the rub!

In the meantime the cribbage went on, and Mrs. Todgers went off; for the youngest gentleman dropping her society, began to take Miss Pecksniff to the play. He also began, as Mrs. Todgers said, to slip home "in his dinner-times," and to get away from "the office" at unholy seasons: and twice, as he informed Mrs. Todgers himself, he received anonymous letters, inclosing cards from Furniture Warehouses—clearly the act of that ungentlemanly ruffian Jinkins: only he hadn't evidence enough to call him out upon. All of which, so Mrs. Todgers told Miss Pecksniff, spoke as plain English as the shining sun.

"My dear Miss Pecksniff, you may depend upon it," said Mrs. Todgers. "that he is burning to propose."

"My goodness me, why don't he then!" cried Cherry.

"Men are so much more timid than we think 'em, my dear," returned Mrs. Todgers. "They balk themselves continually. I saw the words on Todgers's lips for months and months and months before he said 'em."

Miss Pecksniff submitted that Todgers might not have been a fair specimen.

"Oh yes he was. Oh bless you, yes my dear. I was very particular in those days, I assure you," said Mrs. Todgers, bridleing. "No, no. You give Mr. Moddle a little encouragement, Miss Pecksniff, if you wish him to speak; and he'll speak fast enough depend upon it."

"I am sure I don't know what encouragement he would have, Mrs. Todgers," returned Charity. "He walks with me, and plays cards with me, and he comes and sits alone with me."

"Quite right," said Mrs. Todgers. "That's indispensable, my dear."

"And he sits very close to me."

"Also quite correct," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And he looks at me."

"To be sure he does," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And he has his arm upon the back of the chair or sofa, or whatever it is—behind me, you know."

"I should think so," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And then he begins to cry!"

Mrs. Todgers admitted that he might do better than that; and might undoubtedly profit by the recollection of the great Lord Nelson's signal at the battle of Trafalgar. Still, she said, he would come round, or, not to mince the matter, would be brought round, if Miss Pecksniff took up a decided position, and plainly showed him that it must be done.

Determining to regulate her conduct by this opinion, the young lady received Mr. Moddle, on the earliest subsequent occasion, with an air of constraint; and gradually leading him to inquire, in a dejected manner, why she was so changed, confessed to him that she felt it necessary for their mutual peace and happiness to take a decided step. They had been much together lately, she observed, much together, and had tasted the sweets of a genuine reciprocity of sentiment. She never could forget him, nor could she ever cease to think of him with feelings of the liveliest friendship; but people had begun to talk, the thing had been observed, and it was necessary that they should be nothing more to each other, than any gentleman and lady in society usually are. She was glad she had had the resolution to say thus much before her feelings had been tried too far; they had been greatly tried, she would admit; but though she was weak and silly, she would soon get the better of it, she hoped.

Moddle, who had by this time become in the last degree maudlin, and who wept abundantly, inferred from the foregoing avowal, that it was his mission to communicate to others the blight which had fallen on himself; and that, being a kind of unintentional Vampire, he had had Miss Pecksniff assigned to him by the Fates, as Victim Number One. Miss Pecksniff controverting this opinion as sinful, Moddle was goaded on to ask whether she could be contented with a blighted heart; and it appearing on further examination that she could be, plighted his dismal troth, which was accepted and returned.

He bore his good fortune with the utmost moderation. Instead of being triumphant, he shed more tears than he had ever been known to shed before: and, sobbing, said:

"Oh, what a day this has been! I can't go back to the office this afternoon. Oh, what a trying day this has been! Good Gracious!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS IN EDEN, AND A PROCEEDING OUT OF IT. MARTIN MAKES A DISCOVERY OF SOME IMPORTANCE.

FROM Mr. Moddle to Eden is an easy and natural transition. Mr. Moddle, living in the atmosphere of Miss Pecksniff's love, dwelt (if he had but known it) in a terrestrial Paradise. The thriving city of Eden was also a terrestrial Paradise, upon the showing of its proprietors. The beautiful Miss Pecksniff might have been poetically described as a something too good for man in his fallen and degraded state. That was exactly the character of the thriving city of Eden, as poetically heightened by Zephaniah Scadder, General Choke, and other worthies: part and parcel of the talons of that great American Eagle, which is always airing itself sky-high in purest æther, and never, no never, never, tumbles down, with dragged wings, into the mud.

When Mark Tapley, leaving Martin in the architectural and surveying offices, had effectually strengthened and encouraged his own spirits by the contemplation of their joint misfortunes, he proceeded, with new cheerfulness, in search of help: congratulating himself, as he went along, on the enviable position to which he had at last attained.

"I used to think, sometimes," said Mr. Tapley, "as a desolate island would suit me, but I should only have had myself to provide for there, and being naturally a easy man to manage, there wouldn't have been much credit in *that*. Now here I've got my partner to take care on, and he's something like the sort of man for the purpose. I want a man as is always a sliding off his legs when he ought to be on 'em. I want a man as is so low down in the school of life, that he's always a making figures of one in his copy-book, and can't get no further. I want a man as is his own great coat and cloak, and is always a wrapping himself up in himself. And I have got him too," said Mr. Tapley, after a moment's silence. "What a happiness!"

He paused to look round, uncertain to which of the log-houses he should repair.

"I don't know which to take," he observed; "that's the truth. They're equally prepossessing outside, and equally commodious, no doubt, within; being fitted up with every convenience that a Alligator, in a state of natur', could possibly require. Let me see! The citizen as turned out last night lives under water, in the

right hand dog-kennel at the corner. I don't want to trouble him if I can help it, poor man, for he is a melancholy object: a reg'lar Settler in every respect. There's a house with a winder, but I'm afraid of their being proud. I don't know whether a door ain't too aristocratic; but here goes for the first one!"

He went up to the nearest cabin, and knocked with his hand. Being desired to enter, he complied.

"Neighbour," said Mark; "for I *am* a neighbour, though you don't know me; I've come a begging. Hallo! hal!—lo!—Am I a-bed, and dreaming!"

He made this exclamation on hearing his own name pronounced, and finding himself clasped about the skirts by two little boys, whose faces he had often washed, and whose suppers he had often cooked, on board of that noble and fast-sailing line of packet ship, the Screw.

"My eyes is wrong!" said Mark. "I don't believe 'em. That ain't my fellow passenger yonder, a nursing her little girl, who, I am sorry to see, is so delicate; and that ain't her husband as come to New York to fetch her. Nor these," he added, looking down upon the boys, "ain't them two young shavers as was so familiar to me; though they are uncommon like 'em. That I must confess."

The woman shed tears, in very joy to see him; the man shook both his hands, and would not let them go; the two boys hugged his legs; the sick child, in the mother's arms, stretched out her burning little fingers, and muttered, in her hoarse, dry throat, his well-remembered name.

It was the same family, sure enough. Altered by the salubrious air of Eden. But the same.

"This is a new sort of a morning call," said Mark, drawing a long breath. "It strikes one all of a heap. Wait a little bit! I'm a coming round, fast. That'll do! These gentlemen ain't my friends. Are they on the wisiting list of the house?"

The inquiry referred to certain gaunt pigs, who had walked in after him, and were much interested in the heels of the family. As they did not belong to the mansion, they were expelled by the two little boys.

"I ain't superstitious about toads," said Mark, looking round the room, "but if you could prevail upon the two or three I see in company, to step out at the same time, my young friends, I think they'd find the open air refreshing. Not that I at all object to 'em. A very handsome animal is a toad," said Mr. Tapley, sitting down upon a stool: "very spotted; very like a par-

tickler style of old gentleman about the throat ; very bright-eyed, very cool, and very slippery. But one sees 'em to the best advantage out of doors perhaps."

While pretending, with such talk as this, to be perfectly at his ease, and to be the most indifferent and careless of men, Mark Tapley had an eye on all around him. The wan and meagre aspect of the family, the changed looks of the poor mother, the fevered child she held in her lap, the air of great despondency and little hope on everything, were plain to him, and made a deep impression on his mind. He saw it all as clearly and as quickly, as with his bodily eyes he saw the rough shelves supported by pegs driven between the logs, of which the house was made ; the flour-cask in the corner serving also for a table ; the blankets, spades, and other articles against the walls ; the damp that blotched the ground ; or the crop of vegetable rotteness in every crevice of the hut.

"How is it that you have come here ?" asked the man, when their first expressions of surprise were over.

"Why, we come by the steamer last night," replied Mark. "Our intention is to make our fortunes with punctuality and despatch ; and to retire upon our property as soon as ever it's realised. But how are you all ? You're looking noble !"

"We are but sickly now," said the poor woman, bending over her child. "But we shall do better when we're seasoned to the place."

"There are some here," thought Mark, "whose seasoning will last for ever."

But he said cheerfully, "Do better ! To be sure you will. We shall all do better. What we've got to do is, to keep up our spirits, and be neighbourly. We shall come all right in the end, never fear. That reminds me, by the bye, that my partner's all wrong just at present ; and that I looked in, to beg for him. I wish you'd come, and give me your opinion of him, master."

That must have been a very unreasonable request on the part of Mark Tapley, with which, in their gratitude for his kind offices on board the ship, they would not have complied instantly. The man rose to accompany him without a moment's delay. Before they went, Mark took the sick child in his arms, and tried to comfort the mother ; but the hand of death was on it then, he saw.

They found Martin in the house, lying wrapped up in his blanket on the ground. He was, to all appearance, very ill indeed, and shook and shivered horribly ; not as people do

from cold, but in a frightful kind of spasm or convulsion, that racked his whole body. Mark's friend pronounced his disease an aggravated kind of fever, accompanied with ague ; which was very common in those parts, and which he predicted would be worse to-morrow, and for many more to-morrows. He had had it himself off and on, he said, for a couple of years or so ; but he was thankful that, while so many he had known had died about him, he had escaped with life.

"And with not too much of that," thought Mark, surveying his emaciated form. "Eden for ever !"

They had some medicine in their chest ; and this man of sad experience showed Mark how and when to administer it, and how he could best alleviate the sufferings of Martin. His attentions did not stop there ; for he was backwards and forwards constantly, and rendered Mark good service in all his brisk attempts to make their situation more endurable. Hope or comfort for the future he could not bestow. The season was a sickly one ; the settlement a grave. His child died that night ; and Mark, keeping the secret from Martin, helped to bury it, beneath a tree, next day.

With all his various duties of attendance upon Martin (who became the more exacting in his claims, the worse he grew), Mark worked out of doors, early and late ; and with the assistance of his friend and others, laboured to do something with their land. Not that he had the least strength of heart or hope, or steady purpose in so doing, beyond the habitual cheerfulness of his disposition, and his amazing power of self-sustainment ; for, within himself, he looked on their condition as beyond all hope, and in his own words, "came out strong" in consequence.

"As to coming out as strong as I could wish, sir," he confided to Martin in a leisure moment ; that is to say, one evening, while he was washing the linen of the establishment, after a hard day's work, "that I give up. It's a piece of good fortune as never is to happen to me, I see !"

"Would you wish for circumstances stronger than these ?" Martin retorted with a groan, from underneath his blanket.

"Why, only see how easy they might have been stronger, sir," said Mark, "if it wasn't for the envy of that uncommon fortun' of mine, which is always after me, and tripping me up. The night we landed here, I thought things did look pretty jolly. I won't deny it. I thought they did look pretty jolly."

"How do they look now?" groaned Martin. "Ah!" said Mark, "Ah to be sure. That's the question. How do they look now! On the very first morning of my going out, what do I do? Stumble on a family I know, who are constantly assisting of us in all sorts of ways, from that time to this! That won't do, you know: that ain't what I'd a right to expect. If I had stumbled on a serpent, and got bit; or stumbled on a first-rate patriot, and got bowie-knifed; or stumbled on a lot of Sympathisers with inverted shirt-collars, and got made a lion of; I might have distinguished myself, and earned some credit. As it is, the great object of my voyage is knocked on the head. So it would be, wherever I went. How do you feel to-night, sir?"

"Worse than ever," said poor Martin.

"That's something," returned Mark, "but not enough. Nothing but being very bad myself, and jolly to the last, will ever do me justice."

"In Heaven's name, don't talk of that," said Martin, with a thrill of terror. "What should I do, Mark, if you were taken ill!"

Mr. Tapley's spirits appeared to be stimulated by this remark, although it was not a very flattering one. He proceeded with his washing in a brighter mood; and observed "that his glass was a-rising."

"There's one good thing in this place, sir," said Mr. Tapley, scrubbing away at the linen, "as disposes me to be jolly; and that is, that it's a reg'lar little United States in itself. There's two or three American settlers left; and they coolly comes over one, even here, sir, as if it was the wholesomest and loveliest spot in the world. But they're like the Cock that went and hid himself to save his life, and was found out by the noise he made. They can't help crowing. They was born to do it, and do it they must, whatever comes of it."

Glancing from his work, out at the door, as he said these words Mark's eyes encountered a lean person in a blue frock and a straw hat, with a short black pipe in his mouth, and a great hickory stick, studded all over with knots, in his hand; who smoking and chewing as he came along, and spitting frequently, recorded his progress by a train of decomposed tobacco on the ground.

"Here's one on 'em," cried Mark, "Hannibal Chollop."

"Don't let him in," said Martin, feebly.

"He won't want any letting in," replied Mark. "He'll come in, sir." Which turned out to be quite true, for he did. His face was almost as hard and knobby as his stick; and so

were his hands. His head was like an old black hearth-broom. He sat down on the chest with his hat on; and crossing his legs and looking up at Mark, said, without removing his pipe:

"Well, Mr. Co! and how do you git along, sir?"

It may be necessary to observe that Mr. Tapley had gravely introduced himself to all strangers, by that name.

"Pretty well, sir; pretty well," said Mark.

"If this ain't Mr. Chuzzlewit, ain't it!" exclaimed the visitor. "How do *you* git along, sir?"

Martin shook his head, and drew the blanket over it involuntarily; for he felt that Hannibal was going to spit; and his eye, as the song says, was upon him.

"You need not regard me, sir," observed Mr. Chollop, complacently. "I am fever-proof, and likewise agur."

"Mine was a more selfish motive," said Martin, looking out again. "I was afraid you were going to——"

"I can calc'late my distance, sir," returned Mr. Chollop, "to an inch."

With a proof of which happy faculty he immediately favoured him.

"I re-quire, sir," said Hannibal, "two foot clear in a circ'lar di-rection, and can engage myself toe keep within it. I *have* gone ten foot, in a circ'lar di-rection, but that was for a wager."

"I hope you won it, sir," said Mark.

"Well, sir, I realised the stakes," said Chollop. "Yes sir."

He was silent for a time, during which he was actively engaged in the formation of a magic circle round the chest on which he sat. When it was completed, he began to talk again.

"How do you like our country, sir?" he inquired, looking at Martin.

"Not at all," was the invalid's reply.

Chollop continued to smoke without the least appearance of emotion, until he felt disposed to speak again. That time at length arriving, he took his pipe from his mouth and said:

"I am not surprised to hear you say so. It requires An elevation, and A preparation of the intellect. The mind of man must be prepared for Freedom, Mr. Co."

He addressed himself to Mark: because he saw that Martin, who wished him to go, being already half-mad with feverish irritation which the droning voice of this new horror rendered almost insupportable, had closed his eyes, and turned on his uneasy bed.

"A little bodily preparation wouldn't be amiss, either, would it, sir," said Mark, "in the case of a blessed old swamp like this?"

"Do you consider this a swamp, sir?" inquired Chollop gravely.

"Why yes, sir," returned Mark, "I haven't a doubt about it, myself."

"The sentiment is quite European," said the major, "and does not surprise me: what would your English millions say to such a swamp in England, sir?"

"They'd say it was an uncommon nasty one, I should think," said Mark; "and that they would rather be inoculated for fever in some other way."

"European!" remarked Chollop, with sardonic pity. "Quite European!"

And there he sat. Silent and cool, as if the house were his: smoking away like a factory chimney.

Mr. Chollop was, of course, one of the most remarkable men in the country; but he really was a notorious person besides. He was usually described by his friends, in the South and West, as "a splendid sample of our native raw material, sir," and was much esteemed for his devotion to rational liberty; for the better propagation whereof he usually carried a brace of revolving-pistols in his coat pocket, with seven barrels apiece. He also carried, amongst other trinkets, a sword-stick, which he called his "Tickler;" and a great knife, which (for he was a man of a pleasant turn of humour) he called "Ripper," in allusion to its usefulness as a means of ventilating the stomach of any adversary in a close contest. He had used these weapons with distinguished effect in several instances, all duly chronicled in the newspapers; and was greatly beloved for the gallant manner in which he had "jobbed out" the eye of one gentleman, as he was in the act of knocking at his own street-door.

Mr. Chollop was a man of a roving disposition; and, in any less advanced community, might have been mistaken for a violent vagabond. But his fine qualities being perfectly understood and appreciated in those regions where his lot was cast, and where he had many kindred spirits to consort with, he may be regarded as having been born under a fortunate star, which is not always the case with a man so much before the age in which he lives. Preferring, with a view to the gratification of his tickling and ripping fancies, to dwell upon the outskirts of society, and in the more remote towns and cities, he was in the habit of emigrating from place to place, and establishing in each

some business—usually a newspaper—which he presently sold; for the most part closing the bargain by challenging, stabbing, pistolling, or gouging, the new editor, before he had quite taken possession of the property.

He had come to Eden on a speculation of this kind, but had abandoned it, and was about to leave. He always introduced himself to strangers as a worshipper of Freedom; was the consistent advocate of Lynch law, and slavery; and invariably recommended, both in print and speech, the "tarring and feathering" of any unpopular person who differed from himself. He called this "planting the standard of civilisation in the wilder gardens of My country."

There is little doubt that Chollop would have planted this standard in Eden at Mark's expense, in return for his plainness of speech (for the genuine Freedom is dumb, save when she vaunts herself), but for the utter desolation and decay prevailing in the settlement, and his own approaching departure from it. As it was, he contented himself with showing Mark one of the revolving pistols, and asking him what he thought of that weapon.

"It ain't long since I shot a man down with that, sir, in the State of Illinoy," observed Chollop.

"Did you, indeed!" said Mark, without the smallest agitation. "Very free of you. And very independent!"

"I shot him down, sir," pursued Chollop, "for asserting in the Spartan Portico, a tri-weekly journal, that the ancient Athenians went a-head of the present Locofoco Ticket."

"And what's that?" asked Mark.

"European not to know," said Chollop, smoking placidly. "European quite!"

After a short devotion to the interests of the magic circle, he resumed the conversation by observing:

"You won't half feel yourself at home in Eden, now?"

"No," said Mark, "I don't."

"You miss the imposts of your country. You miss the house dues?" observed Chollop.

"And the houses—rather," said Mark.

"No window dues here, sir," observed Chollop.

"And no windows to put 'em on," said Mark.

"No stakes, no dungeons, no blocks, no racks, no scaffolds, no thumbscrews, no pikes, no pillories," said Chollop.

"Nothing but revolvers and bowie knives," returned Mark. "And what are they? Not worth mentioning!"

The man who had met them on the night of

their arrival came crawling up at this juncture, and looked in at the door.

"Well, sir!" said Chollop. "How do *you* git along?"

He had considerable difficulty in getting along at all, and he said as much in reply.

"Mr. Co And me, sir," observed Chollop, "are disputating a piece. He ought to be slicked up pretty smart, to disputate between the Old World and the New, I do expect?"

"Well!" returned the miserable shadow. "So he had."

"I was merely observing, sir," said Mark, addressing this new visitor, "that I looked upon the city in which we have the honour to live, as being swampy. What's your sentiments?"

"I opinionate it's moist perhaps, at certain times," returned the man.

"But not as moist as England, sir?" cried Chollop, with a fierce expression in his face.

"Oh! Not as moist as England; let alone its Institutions," said the man.

"I should hope there ain't a swamp in all



"JOLLY!"

Americay, as don't whip *that* small island into mush and molasses," observed Chollop, decisively. "You bought slick, straight, and right away, of Scadder, sir?" to Mark.

He answered in the affirmative. Mr. Chollop winked at the other citizen.

"Scadder is a smart man, sir? He is a rising man? He is a man as will come up'ards, right side up, sir?" Mr. Chollop winked again at the other citizen.

"He should have his right side very high up, if I had my way," said Mark. "As high up as the top of a good tall gallows, perhaps."

Mr. Chollop was so delighted at the smartness of his excellent countryman having been too much for the Britisher, and at the Britisher's resenting it, that he could contain himself no longer, and broke forth in a shout of delight. But the strangest exposition of this ruling passion was in the other: the pestilence-stricken, broken, miserable shadow of a man: who derived so much entertainment from the circumstance, that he seemed to forget his own ruin in thinking of it, and laughed outright when he said "that Scadder was a smart man, and had draw'd a lot of British capital that way, as sure as sun-up."

After a full enjoyment of this joke, Mr. Hannibal Chollop sat smoking and improving the circle, without making any attempts either to converse, or to take leave; apparently labouring under the not uncommon delusion, that for a free and enlightened citizen of the United States to convert another man's house into a spittoon for two or three hours together, was a delicate attention, full of interest and politeness, of which nobody could ever tire. At last he rose.

"I am a going easy," he observed.

Mark entreated him to take particular care of himself.

"Afore I go," he said sternly, "I have got a leetle word to say to you. You are darnation 'cute you are."

Mark thanked him for the compliment.

"But you are much too 'cute to last. I can't con-ceive of any spotted Painter in the bush, as ever was so riddled through and through as you will be, I bet."

"What for?" asked Mark.

"We must be cracked-up, sir," retorted Chollop, in a tone of menace. "You are not now in A despotic land. We are a model to the airth, and must be jist cracked-up, I tell you."

"What, I speak too free, do I?" cried Mark.

"I have draw'd upon A man, and fired upon A man for less," said Chollop, frowning. "I have know'd strong men obleeged to make themselves uncommon skase for less. I have know'd men Lynched for less, and beaten into punkin'-sarse for less, by an enlightened people. We are the intellect and virtue of the airth, the cream Of human natur', and the flower Of moral force. Our backs is easy ris. We must be cracked-up, or they rises, and we snarls. We shows our teeth, I tell you, fierce. You'd better crack us up, you had!"

After the delivery of this caution, Mr. Chollop departed; with Ripper, Tickler, and the revolvers, all ready for action on the shortest notice.

"Come out from under the blanket, sir," said Mark, "he's gone. What's this!" he added softly: kneeling down to look into his partner's face, and taking his hot hand. "What's come of all that chattering and swaggering? He's wandering in his mind to-night, and don't know me!"

Martin indeed was dangerously ill; very near his death. He lay in that state many days, during which time Mark's poor friends, regardless of themselves, attended him. Mark, fatigued in mind and body; working all the day and sitting

up at night; worn with hard living and the unaccustomed toil of his new life; surrounded by dismal and discouraging circumstances of every kind; never complained or yielded in the least degree. If ever he had thought Martin selfish or inconsiderate, or had deemed him energetic only by fits and starts, and then too passive for their desperate fortunes, he now forgot it all. He remembered nothing but the better qualities of his fellow-wanderer, and was devoted to him, heart and hand.

Many weeks elapsed before Martin was strong enough to move about with the help of a stick and Mark's arm; and even then his recovery, for want of wholesome air and proper nourishment, was very slow. He was yet in a feeble and weak condition, when the misfortune he had so much dreaded fell upon them. Mark was taken ill.

Mark fought against it; but the malady fought harder, and his efforts were in vain.

"Floored for the present, sir," he said one morning, sinking back upon his bed: "but jolly!"

Floored indeed, and by a heavy blow! As any one but Martin might have known beforehand.

If Mark's friends had been kind to Martin (and they had been very), they were twenty times kinder to Mark. And now it was Martin's turn to work, and sit beside the bed and watch, and listen through the long, long nights, to every sound in the gloomy wilderness; and hear poor Mr. Tapley, in his wandering fancy, playing at skittles in the Dragon, making love-remonstrances to Mrs. Lupin, getting his sea-legs on board the Screw, travelling with old Tom Pinch on English roads, and burning stumps of trees in Eden, all at once.

But whenever Martin gave him drink or medicine, or tended him in any way, or came into the house returning from some drudgery without, the patient Mr. Tapley brightened up, and cried: "I'm jolly, sir: I'm jolly!"

Now, when Martin began to think of this, and to look at Mark as he lay there; never reproaching him by so much as an expression of regret; never murmuring; always striving to be manful and staunch; he began to think, how was it that this man who had had so few advantages, was so much better than he who had had so many. And attendance upon a sick bed, but especially the sick bed of one whom we have been accustomed to see in full activity and vigour, being a great breeder of reflection, he began to ask himself in what they differed.

He was assisted in coming to a conclusion on

this head by the frequent presence of Mark's friend, their fellow-passenger across the ocean : which suggested to him that in regard to having aided her, for example, they had differed very much. Somehow he coupled Tom Pinch with this train of reflection ; and thinking that Tom would be very likely to have struck up the same sort of acquaintance under similar circumstances, began to think in what respects two people so extremely different were like each other, and were unlike him. At first sight there was nothing very distressing in these meditations, but they did undoubtedly distress him for all that.

Martin's nature was a frank and generous one ; but he had been bred up in his grandfather's house ; and it will usually be found that the meaner domestic vices propagate themselves to be their own antagonists. Selfishness does this especially ; so do suspicion, cunning, stealth, and covetous propensities. Martin had unconsciously reasoned as a child, "My guardian takes so much thought of himself, that unless I do the like by *myself*, I shall be forgotten." So he had grown selfish.

But he had never known it. If any one had taxed him with the vice, he would have indignantly repelled the accusation, and conceived himself unworthily aspersed. He never would have known it, but that being newly risen from a bed of dangerous sickness, to watch by such another couch, he felt how nearly Self had dropped into the grave, and what a poor, dependent, miserable thing it was.

It was natural for him to reflect—he had months to do it in—upon his own escape, and Mark's extremity. This led him to consider which of them could be the better spared, and why? Then the curtain slowly rose a very little way ; and Self, Self, Self was shown below.

He asked himself, besides, when dreading Mark's decease (as all men do and must, at such a time), whether he had done his duty by him, and had deserved and made a good response to his fidelity and zeal. No. Short as their companionship had been, he felt in many, many instances, that there was blame against himself ; and still inquiring why, the curtain slowly rose a little more, and Self, Self, Self dilated on the scene.

It was long before he fixed the knowledge of himself so firmly in his mind that he could thoroughly discern the truth ; but in the hideous solitude of that most hideous place, with Hope so far removed, Ambition quenched, and Death beside him rattling at the very door, reflection came, as in a plague-beleaguered town ; and so

he felt and knew the failing of his life, and saw distinctly what an ugly spot it was.

Eden was a hard school to learn so hard a lesson in ; but there were teachers in the swamp and thicket, and the pestilential air, who had a searching method of their own.

He made a solemn resolution that when his strength returned he would not dispute the point or resist the conviction, but would look upon it as an established fact, that selfishness was in his breast, and must be rooted out. He was so doubtful (and with justice) of his own character, that he determined not to say one word of vain regret or good resolve to Mark, but steadily to keep his purpose before his own eyes solely : and there was not a jot of pride in this ; nothing but humility and steadfastness : the best armour he could wear. So low had Eden brought him down. So high had Eden raised him up.

After a long and lingering illness (in certain forlorn stages of which, when too far gone to speak, he had feebly written "jolly!" on a slate), Mark showed some symptoms of returning health. They came and went, and flickered for a time ; but he began to mend at last decidedly ; and after that, continued to improve from day to day.

As soon as he was well enough to talk without fatigue, Martin consulted him upon a project he had in his mind, and which a few months back he would have carried into execution without troubling anybody's head but his own.

"Ours is a desperate case," said Martin. "Plainly. The place is deserted ; its failure must have become known ; and selling what we have bought to any one, for anything, is hopeless, even if it were honest. We left home on a mad enterprise, and have failed. The only hope left us : the only one end for which we have now to try, is to quit this settlement for ever, and get back to England. Any how ! by any means ! Only to get back there, Mark."

"That's all, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, with a significant stress upon the words : "only that !"

"Now, upon this side of the water," said Martin, "we have but one friend who can help us, and that is Mr. Bevan."

"I thought of him when you was ill," said Mark.

"But for the time that would be lost, I would even write to my grandfather," Martin went on to say, "and implore him for money to free us from this trap into which we were so cruelly decoyed. Shall I try Mr. Bevan first?"

"He's a very pleasant sort of a gentleman," said Mark. "I think so."

"The few goods we brought here, and in which we spent our money, would produce something if sold," resumed Martin; "and whatever they realise shall be paid him instantly. But they can't be sold here."

"There's nobody but corpses to buy 'em," said Mr. Tapley, shaking his head with a rueful air, "and pigs."

"Shall I tell him so, and only ask him for money enough to enable us by the cheapest means to reach New York, or any port from which we may hope to get a passage home, by serving in any capacity? Explaining to him at the same time how I am connected, and that I will endeavour to repay him, even through my grandfather immediately on our arrival in England?"

"Why to be sure," said Mark: "he can only say no, and he may say yes. If you don't mind trying him, sir—"

"Mind!" exclaimed Martin. "I am to blame for coming here, and I would do anything to get away. I grieve to think of the past. If I had taken your opinion sooner, Mark, we never should have been here, I am certain."

Mr. Tapley was very much surprised at this admission, but protested, with great vehemence, that they would have been there all the same; and that he had set his heart upon coming to Eden, from the first word he had ever heard of it.

Martin then read him a letter to Mr. Bevan, which he had already prepared. It was frankly and ingeniously written, and described their situation without the least concealment; plainly stated the miseries they had undergone; and preferred their request in modest but straightforward terms. Mark highly commended it; and they determined to despatch it by the next steam-boat going the right way, that might call to take in wood at Eden,—where there was plenty of wood to spare. Not knowing how to address Mr. Bevan at his own place of abode, Martin superscribed it to the care of the memorable Mr. Norris of New York, and wrote upon the cover an entreaty that it might be forwarded without delay.

More than a week elapsed before a boat appeared; but at length they were awakened very early one morning by the high-pressure snorting of the "Esau Slodge;" named after one of the most remarkable men in the country, who had been very eminent somewhere. Hurrying down to the landing-place, they got it safe on board; and waiting anxiously to see the boat depart, stopped up the gangway: an instance of neglect which caused the "Capting" of the Esau Slodge to "wish he might be sifted fine as

flour, and whittled small as chips; that if they didn't come off that there fixing right smart too, he'd spill 'em in the drink:" whereby the Capting metaphorically said he'd throw them in the river.

They were not likely to receive an answer for eight or ten weeks at the earliest. In the meantime they devoted such strength as they had, to the attempted improvement of their land; to clearing some of it, and preparing it for useful purposes. Monstrously defective as their farming was, still it was better than their neighbours'; for Mark had some practical knowledge of such matters, and Martin learned of him; whereas the other settlers who remained upon the putrid swamp (a mere handful, and those withered by disease), appeared to have wandered there with the idea that husbandry was the natural gift of all mankind. They helped each other after their own manner in these struggles, and in all others; but they worked as hopelessly and sadly as a gang of convicts in a penal settlement.

Often at night when Mark and Martin were alone, and lying down to sleep, they spoke of home, familiar places, houses, roads, and people whom they knew; sometimes in the lively hope of seeing them again, and sometimes with a sorrowful tranquillity, as if that hope were dead. It was a source of great amazement to Mark Tapley to find, pervading all these conversations, a singular alteration in Martin.

"I don't know what to make of him," he thought one night, "he ain't what I supposed. He don't think of himself half as much. I'll try him again. Asleep, sir?"

"No, Mark."

"Thinking of home, sir?"

"Yes, Mark."

"So was I, sir. I was wondering how Mr. Pinch and Mr. Pecksniff gets on now.

"Poor Tom!" said Martin, thoughtfully.

"Weak-minded man, sir," observed Mr. Tapley. "Plays the organ for nothing, sir. Takes no care of himself?"

"I wish he took a little more, indeed," said Martin. "Though I don't know why I should. We shouldn't like him half as well, perhaps."

"He gets put upon, sir," hinted Mark.

"Yes," said Martin, after a short silence. "I know that, Mark."

He spoke so regretfully, that his partner abandoned the theme, and was silent for a short time, until he had thought of another.

"Ah, sir!" said Mark, with a sigh. "Dear me! You've ventured a good deal for a young lady's love!"

"I tell you what. I'm not so sure of that, Mark," was the reply; so hastily and energetically spoken, that Martin sat up in his bed to give it. "I begin to be far from clear upon it. You may depend upon it, she is very unhappy. She has sacrificed her peace of mind; she has endangered her interests very much; she can't run away from those who are jealous of her, and opposed to her, as I have done. She has to endure, Mark: to endure without the possibility of action, poor girl! I begin to think she has more to bear than ever I have had. Upon my soul, I do!"

Mr. Tapley opened his eyes wide, in the dark; but did not interrupt.

"And I'll tell you a secret, Mark," said Martin, "since we *are* upon this subject. That ring—"

"Which ring, sir?" Mark inquired: opening his eyes still wider.

"That ring she gave me when we parted, Mark. She bought it; bought it; knowing I was poor and proud (Heaven help me! Proud!) and wanted money."

"Who says so, sir?" asked Mark.

"I say so. I know it. I thought of it, my good fellow, hundreds of times, while you were lying ill. And like a beast, I took it from her hand, and wore it on my own, and never dreamed of this even at the moment when I parted with it, when some faint glimmering of the truth might surely have possessed me! But it's late," said Martin, checking himself, "and you are weak and tired, I know. You only talk to cheer me up. Good night! God bless you, Mark!"

"God bless you, sir! But I'm reg'larly defrauded," thought Mr. Tapley, turning round, with a happy face. "It's a swindle. I never entered for this sort of service. There'll be no credit in being jolly with *him*!"

The time wore on, and other steam-boats coming from the point on which their hopes were fixed, arrived to take in wood; but still no answer to the letter. Rain, heat, foul slime, and noxious vapour, with all the ills and filthy things they bred, prevailed. The earth, the air, the vegetation, and the water that they drank, all teemed with deadly properties. Their fellow-passenger had lost two children long before; and buried now her last. Such things are much too common to be widely known or cared for. Smart citizens grow rich and friendless victims smart and die, and are forgotten. That is all.

At last, a boat came panting up the ugly river, and stopped at Eden. Mark was waiting at the wood hut, when it came, and had a letter handed to him from on board. He bore

it off to Martin. They looked at one another, trembling.

"It feels heavy," faltered Martin. And opening it, a little roll of dollar-notes fell out upon the ground.

What either of them said, or did, or felt, at first, neither of them knew. All Mark could ever tell was, that he was at the river's bank again out of breath, before the boat had gone, inquiring when it would retrace its track, and put in there.

The answer was, in ten or twelve days: notwithstanding which, they began to get their goods together and to tie them up, that very night. When this stage of excitement was passed, each of them believed (they found this out, in talking of it afterwards) that he would surely die before the boat returned.

They lived, however, and it came, after the lapse of three long crawling weeks. At sunrise, on an autumn day, they stood upon her deck.

"Courage! We shall meet again!" cried Martin, waving his hand to two thin figures on the bank. "In the old world!"

"Or in the next one," added Mark below his breath. "To see them standing side by side, so quiet, is a'most the worst of all!"

They looked at one another, as the vessel moved away, and then looked backward at the spot from which it hurried fast. The log-house, with the open door, and drooping trees about it; the stagnant morning mist, and red sun, dimly seen beyond; the vapour rising up from land and river; the quick stream making the loathsome banks it washed, more flat and dull: how often they returned in dreams! How often it was happiness to wake, and find them Shadows that had vanished!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN WHICH THE TRAVELLERS MOVE HOMEWARD, AND ENCOUNTER SOME DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS UPON THE WAY.

AMONG the passengers on board the steam-boat, there was a faint gentleman sitting on a low camp-stool with his legs on a high barrel of flour, as if he were looking at the prospect with his ankles; who attracted their attention speedily.

He had straight black hair, parted up the middle of his head, and hanging down upon his coat; a little fringe of hair upon his chin; wore no neckcloth; a white hat; a suit of black,

long in the sleeves, and short in the legs; soiled brown stockings, and laced shoes. His complexion, naturally muddy, was rendered muddier by too strict an economy of soap and water; and the same observation will apply to the washable part of his attire, which he might have changed with comfort to himself, and gratification to his friends. He was about five-and-thirty; was crushed and jammed up in a heap, under the shade of a large green cotton umbrella; and ruminated over his tobacco-plug like a cow.

He was not singular, to be sure, in these respects; for every gentleman on board appeared to have had a difference with his laundress, and to have left off washing himself in early youth. Every gentleman, too, was perfectly stopped up with tight plugging, and was dislocated in the greater part of his joints. But about this gentleman there was a peculiar air of sagacity and wisdom, which convinced Martin that he was no common character: and this turned out to be the case.

"How do you do, sir?" said a voice in Martin's ear.

"How do you do, sir?" said Martin.

It was a tall thin gentleman who spoke to him, with a carpet-cap on, and a long loose coat of green baize, ornamented about the pockets with black velvet.

"You air from Europe, sir?"

"I am," said Martin.

"You air fortunate, sir."

Martin thought so too: but he soon discovered that the gentleman and he attached different meanings to this remark.

"You air fortunate, sir, in having an opportunity of beholding our Elijah Pogram, sir."

"Your Elijahpogram!" said Martin, thinking it was all one word, and a building of some sort.

"Yes, sir."

Martin tried to look as if he understood him, but he couldn't make it out.

"Yes, sir," repeated the gentleman. "Our Elijah Pogram, sir, is, at this minute, identically settin' by the en-gine biler."

The gentleman under the umbrella put his right forefinger to his eyebrow, as if he were revolving schemes of state.

"That is Elijah Pogram, is it?" said Martin.

"Yes, sir," replied the other. "That is Elijah Pogram."

"Dear me!" said Martin. "I am astonished." But he had not the least idea who this Elijah Pogram was; having never heard the name in all his life.

"If the biler of this vessel was Toe bust, sir," said his new acquaintance, "and Toe bust now, this would be a festival day in the calendar of despotism; pretty nigh equallin', sir, in its effects upon the human race, our Fourth of glorious July. Yes, sir, that is the Honourable Elijah Pogram, Member of Congress; one of the master-minds of our country, sir. There is a brow, sir, there!"

"Quite remarkable," said Martin.

"Yes, sir. Our own immortal Chiggle, sir, is said to have observed, when he made the celebrated Pogram statter in marble, which rose so much con-test and preju-dice in Europe, that the brow was more than mortal. This was before the Pogram Defiance, and was, therefore, a pre-diction, cruel smart."

"What is the Pogram Defiance?" asked Martin, thinking, perhaps, it was the sign of a public-house.

"An o-ration, sir," returned his friend.

"Oh! to be sure," cried Martin. "What am I thinking of! It defied—"

"It defied the world, sir," said the other, gravely. "Defied the world in general to compete with our country upon any hook: and devellop'd our internal resources for making war upon the universal airth. You would like to know Elijah Pogram, sir?"

"If you please," said Martin.

"Mr. Pogram," said the stranger—Mr. Pogram having overheard every word of the dialogue—"this is a gentleman from Europe, sir: from England, sir. But gen'rous ene-mies may meet upon the neutral sile of private life, I think."

The languid Mr. Pogram shook hands with Martin, like a clock-work figure that was just running down. But he made amends by chewing like one that was just wound up.

"Mr. Pogram," said the introducer, "is a public servant, sir. When Congress is recessed, he makes himself acquainted with those free United States, of which he is the gifted son."

It occurred to Martin, that if the Honourable Elijah Pogram had stayed at home, and sent his shoes upon a tour, they would have answered the same purpose; for they were the only part of him in a situation to see anything.

In course of time, however, Mr. Pogram rose; and having ejected certain plugging consequences which would have impeded his articulation, took up a position where there was something to lean against, and began to talk to Martin: shading himself with the green umbrella all the time.

As he began with the words, "How do you like—?" Martin took him up, and said:

"The country, I presume?"

"Yes, sir," said Elijah Pogram. A knot of passengers gathered round to hear what followed; and Martin heard his friend say, as he whispered to another friend, and rubbed his hands, "Pogram will smash him into sky-blue fits, I know!"

"Why," said Martin, after a moment's hesitation, "I have learned by experience, that you take an unfair advantage of a stranger, when you ask that question. You don't mean it to be answered, except in one way. Now, I don't choose to answer it in that way, for I cannot honestly answer it in that way. And therefore, I would rather not answer it at all."

But Mr. Pogram was going to make a great speech in the next session about foreign relations, and was going to write strong articles on the subject; and as he greatly favoured the free and independent custom (a very harmless and agreeable one) of procuring information of any sort in any kind of confidence, and afterwards perverting it publicly in any manner that happened to suit him, he had determined to get at Martin's opinions somehow or other. For, if he could have got nothing out of him, he would have had to invent it for him, and that would have been laborious. He made a mental note of his answer, and went in again.

"You are from Eden, sir? How did you like Eden?"

Martin said what he thought of that part of the country, in pretty strong terms.

"It is strange," said Pogram, looking round upon the group, "this hatred of our country, and her Institutions! This national antipathy is deeply rooted in the British mind!"

"Good Heaven, sir," cried Martin. "Is the Eden Land Corporation, with Mr. Scadder at its head, and all the misery it has worked, at its door, an Institution of America? A part of any form of government that ever was known or heard of?"

"I consider the cause of this to be," said Pogram, looking round again and taking himself up where Martin had interrupted him, "partly jealousy and prejudice, and partly the natural unfitness of the British people to appreciate the exalted Institutions of our native land. I expect, sir," turning to Martin again, "that a gentleman named Chollop happened in upon you during your location in the town of Eden?"

"Yes," answered Martin; "but my friend can answer this better than I can, for I was very ill at the time. Mark! the gentleman is speaking of Mr. Chollop."

"Oh. Yes, sir. Yes. I see him," observed Mark.

"A splendid example of our native raw material, sir?" said Pogram, interrogatively.

"Indeed, sir!" cried Mark.

The Honourable Elijah Pogram glanced at his friends as though he would have said, "Observe this! See what follows!" and they rendered tribute to the Pogram genius, by a gentle murmur.

"Our fellow-countryman is a model of a man, quite fresh from Natur's mould!" said Pogram, with enthusiasm. "He is a true-born child of this free hemisphere! Verdant as the mountains of our country; bright and flowing as our mineral Licks; unspiled by withering conventionalities as air our broad and boundless Pearchers! Rough he may be. So air our Barrs. Wild he may be. So air our Buffalers. But he is a child of Natur, and a child of Freedom; and his boastful answer to the Despot and the Tyrant is, that his bright home is in the Settin' Sun."

Part of this referred to Chollop, and part to a western post-master, who, being a public defaulter not very long before (a character not at all uncommon in America), had been removed from office; and on whose behalf Mr. Pogram (he voted for Pogram) had thundered the last sentence from his seat in Congress, at the head of an unpopular President. It told brilliantly; for the bystanders were delighted, and one of them said to Martin, "that he guessed he had now seen something of the eloquent aspect of our country, and was chawed up pretty small."

Mr. Pogram waited until his hearers were calm again, before he said to Mark:

"You do not seem to coincide, sir?"

"Why," said Mark, "I didn't like him much; and that's the truth, sir. I thought he was a bully; and I didn't admire his carryin' them murderous little persuaders, and being so ready to use 'em."

"It's singler!" said Pogram, lifting his umbrella high enough to look all round from under it. "It's strange! You observe the settled opposition to our Institutions which pervades the British mind!"

"What an extraordinary people you are!" cried Martin. "Are Mr. Chollop and the class he represents, an Institution here? Are pistols with revolving barrels, sword-sticks, bowie-knives, and such things, Institutions on which you pride yourselves? Are bloody duels, brutal combats, savage assaults, shooting down and stabbing in the streets, your Institutions! Why, I shall

hear next, that Dishonour and Fraud are among the Institutions of the great republic !”

The moment the words passed his lips, the Honourable Elijah Pogram looked round again.

“This morbid hatred of our Institutions,” he observed, “is quite a study for the psychological observer. He’s alludin’ to Repudiation now !”

“Oh ! You may make anything an Institution if you like,” said Martin, laughing, “and I confess you had me there, for you certainly have made that, one. But the greater part of these things are one Institution with us, and we call it by the generic name of Old Bailey !”

The bell being rung for dinner at this moment, everybody ran away into the cabin, whither the Honourable Elijah Pogram fled with such precipitation that he forgot his umbrella was up, and fixed it so tightly in the cabin door that it could neither be let down nor got out. For a minute or so this accident created a perfect rebellion among the hungry passengers behind, who, seeing the dishes and hearing the knives and forks at work, well knew what would happen unless they got there instantly, and were nearly mad : while several virtuous citizens at the table were in deadly peril of choking themselves in their unnatural efforts to get rid of all the meat before these others came.

They carried the umbrella by storm, however, and rushed in at the breach. The Honourable Elijah Pogram and Martin found themselves, after a severe struggle, side by side, as they might have come together in the pit of a London theatre ; and for four whole minutes afterwards, Pogram was snapping up great blocks of everything he could get hold of, like a raven. When he had taken this unusually protracted dinner, he began to talk to Martin ; and begged him not to have the least delicacy in speaking with perfect freedom to him, for he was a calm philosopher. Which Martin was extremely glad to hear ; for he had begun to speculate on Elijah being a disciple of that other school of republican philosophy, whose noble sentiments are carved with knives upon a pupil’s body, and written, not with pen and ink, but tar and feathers.

“What do you think of my countrymen who are present, sir ?” inquired Elijah Pogram.

“Oh ! very pleasant,” said Martin.

They were a very pleasant party. No man had spoken a word ; every one had been intent, as usual, on his own private gorging ; and the greater part of the company were decidedly dirty feeders.

The Honourable Elijah Pogram looked at

Martin as if he thought “You don’t mean that, I know !” And he was soon confirmed in this opinion.

Sitting opposite to them was a gentleman in a high state of tobacco, who wore quite a little beard, composed of the overflowings of that weed, as they had dried about his mouth and chin ; so common an ornament that it would scarcely have attracted Martin’s observation, but that this good citizen, burning to assert his equality against all comers, sucked his knife for some moments, and made a cut with it at the butter, just as Martin was in the act of taking some. There was a juiciness about the deed that might have sickened a scavenger.

When Elijah Pogram (to whom this was an every-day incident) saw that Martin put the plate away, and took no butter, he was quite delighted, and said :

“Well ! The morbid hatred of you British to the Institutions of our country, is as-*TON*ishing !”

“Upon my life !” cried Martin, in his turn, “this is the most wonderful community that ever existed. A man deliberately makes a hog of himself, and *that’s* an Institution !”

“We have no time to acquire forms, sir,” said Elijah Pogram.

“Acquire !” cried Martin. “But it’s not a question of acquiring anything. It’s a question of losing the natural politeness of a savage, and that instinctive good breeding which admonishes one man not to offend and disgust another. Don’t you think that man over the way, for instance, naturally knows better, but considers it a very fine and independent thing to be a brute in small matters ?”

“He is a native of our country, and is naturally bright and spry, of course,” said Mr. Pogram.

“Now, observe what this comes to, Mr. Pogram,” pursued Martin. “The mass of your countrymen begin by stubbornly neglecting little social observances, which have nothing to do with gentility, custom, usage, government, or country, but are acts of common, decent, natural, human politeness. You abet them in this, by resenting all attacks upon their social offences as if they were a beautiful national feature. From disregarding small obligations they come in regular course to disregard great ones ; and so refuse to pay their debts. What they may do, or what they may refuse to do next, I don’t know ; but any man may see if he will, that it will be something following in natural succession, and a part of one great growth, which is rotten at the root.”

The mind of Mr. Pogram was too philosophical

to see this, so they went on deck again, where, resuming his former post, he chewed until he was in a lethargic state, amounting to insensibility.

After a weary voyage of several days, they came again to that same wharf where Mark had been so nearly left behind, on the night of starting for Eden. Captain Kedgick, the landlord, was standing there, and was greatly surprised to see them coming from the boat.

"Why, what the 'tarnal!" cried the captain. "Well! I do admire at this, I do!"

"We can stay at your house until to-morrow, captain, I suppose?" said Martin.

"I reckon you can stay there for a twelve-month if you like," retorted Kedgick coolly. "But our people won't best like your coming back."

"Won't like it, Captain Kedgick!" said Martin.



"WHY, WHAT THE 'TARNAL!" CRIED THE CAPTAIN. "WELL! I DO ADMIRE AT THIS, I DO!"

"They did expect you was a-going to settle," Kedgick answered, as he shook his head.

"They've been took in, you can't deny!"

"What do you mean?" cried Martin.

"You didn't ought to have received 'em," said the captain. "No you didn't!"

"My good friend," returned Martin, "did I want to receive them? Was it any act of mine? Didn't you tell me they would rile up, and that I should be flayed like a wild cat—and threaten all kinds of vengeance, if I didn't receive them?"

"I don't know about that," returned the cap-

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 18.

tain. "But when our people's frills is out, they're starched up pretty stiff, I tell you!"

With that, he fell into the rear to walk with Mark, while Martin and Elijah Pogram went on to the National.

"We've come back alive, you see!" said Mark.

"It ain't the thing I did expect," the captain grumbled. "A man ain't got no right to be a public man unless he meets the public views. Our fashionable people wouldn't have attended his le-vee, if they had know'd it."

Nothing mollified the captain, who persisted in taking it very ill, that they had not both died in Eden. The boarders at the National felt strongly on the subject too; but it happened by good fortune that they had not much time to think about this grievance, for it was suddenly determined to pounce upon the Honourable Elijah Pogram, and give *him* a le-vee forthwith.

As the general evening meal of the house was over before the arrival of the boat, Martin, Mark, and Pogram were taking tea and fixings at the public table by themselves, when the deputation entered, to announce this honour: consisting of six gentlemen boarders, and a very shrill boy.

"Sir!" said the spokesman.

"Mr. Pogram!" cried the shrill boy.

The spokesman thus reminded of the shrill boy's presence, introduced him. "Doctor Ginery Dunkle, sir. A gentleman of great poetical elements. He has recently joined us here, sir, and is an acquisition to us, sir, I do assure you. Yes, sir. Mr. Jodd, sir. Mr. Izzard, sir. Mr. Julius Bib, sir."

"Julius Washington Merryweather Bib," said the gentleman himself *to* himself.

"I beg your pardon, sir. Excuse me. Mr. Julius Washington Merryweather Bib, sir; a gentleman in the lumber line, sir, and much esteemed. Colonel Groper, sir. Professor Piper, sir. My own name, sir, is Oscar Buffum."

Each man took one slide forward as he was named; butted at the Honourable Elijah Pogram with his head; shook hands, and slid back again. The introductions being completed, the spokesman resumed.

"Sir!"

"Mr. Pogram!" cried the shrill boy.

"Perhaps," said the spokesman, with a hopeless look, "you will be so good, Doctor Ginery Dunkle, as to charge yourself with the execution of our little office, sir?"

As there was nothing the shrill boy desired more, he immediately stepped forward.

"Mr. Pogram! Sir! A handful Of your fellow citizens, sir, hearing Of your arrival at the National Hotel, and feeling the patriotic character Of your public services, wish, sir, to have the gratification Of beholding you, and mixing with you, sir; and unbending with you, sir, in those moments which—"

"Air," suggested Buffum.

"Which air so peculiarly the lot, sir, Of our great and happy country."

"Hear!" cried Colonel Groper, in a loud voice. "Good! Hear him! Good!"

"And therefore, sir," pursued the Doctor, "they request; as A mark Of their respect; the

honour of your company at a little le-Vee, sir, in the ladies' ordinary, at eight o'clock."

Mr. Pogram bowed and said:

"Fellow-countrymen!"

"Good!" cried the Colonel. "Hear him! Good!"

Mr. Pogram bowed to the Colonel individually, and then resumed:

"Your approbation of my labours in the common cause, goes to my heart. At all times and in all places; in the ladies' ordinary, My friends, and in the Battle Field—"

"Good, very good! Hear him! Hear him!" said the Colonel.

"The name Of Pogram will be proud to jine you. And may it, My friends, be written on My tomb, 'He was a member of the Con-gress of our common country, and was ac-Tive in his trust.'"

"The Com-mittee, sir," said the shrill boy, "will wait upon you at five minutes afore eight. I take My leave, sir!"

Mr. Pogram shook hands with him, and everybody else, once more; and when they came back again at five minutes before eight, they said, one by one, in a melancholy voice, "How do you do, sir?" and shook hands with Mr. Pogram all over again, as if he had been abroad for a twelve-month in the meantime, and they met now at a funeral.

But, by this time, Mr. Pogram had freshened himself up, and had composed his hair and features after the Pogram statue, so that any one with half an eye might cry out, "There he is! as he delivered the Defiance!" The Committee were embellished also; and when they entered the ladies' ordinary in a body, there was much clapping of hands from ladies and gentlemen, accompanied by cries of "Pogram! Pogram!" and some standing up on chairs to see him.

The object of the popular caress looked round the room as he walked up it, and smiled: at the same time observing to the shrill boy, that he knew something of the beauty of the daughters of their common country, but had never seen it in such lustre and perfection as at that moment. Which the shrill boy put in the paper next day; to Elijah Pogram's great surprise.

"We will re-quest you, sir, if you please," said Buffum, laying hands on Mr. Pogram as if he were taking his measure for a coat, "to stand up with your back agin the wall right in the furthest corner, that there may be more room for our fellow cit-izens. If you could set your back right slap agin that curtain-peg, sir, keeping your left leg everlastingly behind the stove, we should be fixed quite slick."

Mr. Pogram did as he was told, and wedged himself into such a little corner, that the Pogram statue wouldn't have known him.

The entertainments of the evening then began. Gentlemen brought ladies up, and brought themselves up, and brought each other up; and asked Elijah Pogram what he thought of this political question, and what he thought of that; and looked at him, and looked at one another, and seemed very unhappy indeed. The ladies on the chairs looked at Elijah Pogram through their glasses, and said audibly, "I wish he'd speak. Why don't he speak? Oh, do ask him to speak!" And Elijah Pogram looked sometimes at the ladies and sometimes elsewhere, delivering senatorial opinions, as he was asked for them. But the great end and object of the meeting seemed to be, not to let Elijah Pogram out of the corner on any account: so there they kept him hard and fast.

A great bustle at the door, in the course of the evening, announced the arrival of some remarkable person; and immediately afterwards an elderly gentleman, much excited, was seen to precipitate himself upon the crowd, and battle his way towards the Honourable Elijah Pogram. Martin, who had found a snug place of observation in a distant corner, where he stood with Mark beside him (for he did not so often forget him now as formerly, though he still did sometimes), thought he knew this gentleman, but had no doubt of it, when he cried as loud as he could, with his eyes starting out of his head:

"Sir, Mrs. Hominy!"

"Lord bless that woman, Mark. She has turned up again!"

"Here she comes, sir," answered Mr. Tapley. "Pogram knows her. A public character! Always got her eye upon her country, sir! If that there lady's husband is of my opinion, what a jolly old gentleman he must be!"

A lane was made; and Mrs. Hominy, with the aristocratic stalk, the pocket handkerchief, the clasped hands, and the classical cap, came slowly up it, in a procession of one. Mr. Pogram testified emotions of delight on seeing her, and a general hush prevailed. For it was known that when a woman like Mrs. Hominy encountered a man like Pogram, something interesting must be said.

Their first salutations were exchanged in a voice too low to reach the impatient ears of the throng; but they soon became audible, for Mrs. Hominy felt her position, and knew what was expected of her.

Mrs. H. was hard upon him at first; and put him through a rigid catechism, in reference to a

certain vote he had given, which she had found it necessary, as the mother of the modern Gracchi, to deprecate in a line by itself, set up expressly for the purpose in German text. But Mr. Pogram evading it by a well-timed allusion to the star-spangled banner, which, it appeared, had the remarkable peculiarity of flouting the breeze whenever it was hoisted where the wind blew, she forgave him. They now enlarged on certain questions of tariff, commercial treaty, boundary, importation and exportation, with great effect. And Mrs. Hominy not only talked, as the saying is, like a book, but actually did talk her own books, word for word.

"My! what is this?" cried Mrs. Hominy, opening a little note which was handed her by her excited gentleman-usher. "Do tell! oh, well, now! on'y think!"

And then she read aloud, as follows:

"Two literary ladies present their compliments to the mother of the modern Gracchi, and claim her kind introduction, as their talented countrywoman, to the honourable (and distinguished) Elijah Pogram, whom the two L. L.'s have often contemplated in the speaking marble of the soul-subduing Chiggle. On a verbal intimation from the mother of the M. G., that she will comply with the request of the two L. L.'s, they will have the immediate pleasure of joining the galaxy assembled to do honour to the patriotic conduct of a Pogram. It may be another bond of union between the two L. L.'s. and the mother of the M. G. to observe, that the two L. L.'s are Transcendental."

Mrs. Hominy promptly rose, and proceeded to the door, whence she returned, after a minute's interval, with the two L. L.'s, whom she led, through the lane in the crowd, with all that stateliness of deportment which was so remarkably her own, up to the great Elijah Pogram. It was (as the shrill boy cried out in an ecstasy) quite the Last Scene from *Coriolanus*.

One of the L. L.'s wore a brown wig of uncommon size. Sticking on the forehead of the other, by invisible means, was a massive cameo, in size and shape like the raspberry tart which is ordinarily sold for a penny, representing on its front the capitol at Washington.

"Miss Toppit, and Miss Codger!" said Mrs. Hominy.

"Codger's the lady so often mentioned in the English newspapers, I should think, sir," whispered Mark. "The oldest inhabitant as never remembers anything."

"To be presented to a Pogram," said Miss Codger, "by a Hominy, indeed, a thrilling moment is it in its impressiveness on what we call

our feelings. But why we call them so, or why impressed they are, or if impressed they are at all, or if at all we are, or if there really is, oh gasping one! a Pogram or a Hominy, or any active principle, to which we give those titles, is a topic, Spirit searching, light abandoned, much too vast to enter on, at this unlooked for crisis."

"Mind and matter," said the lady in the wig, "glide swift into the vortex of immensity. Howls the sublime, and softly sleeps the calm Ideal, in the whispering chambers of Imagination. To hear it, sweet it is. But then, out-laughs the stern philosopher, and saith to the Grottesque, 'What, ho!' arrest for me that Agency. Go bring it here!' And so the vision fadeth."

After this, they both took Mr. Pogram by the hand, and pressed it to their lips, as a patriotic palm. That homage paid, the mother of the modern Gracchi called for chairs, and the three literary ladies went to work in earnest, to bring poor Pogram out, and make him show himself in all his brilliant colours.

How Pogram got out of his depth instantly, and how the three L. L.'s were never in theirs, is a piece of history not worth recording. Suffice it, that being all four out of their depths, and all unable to swim, they splashed up words in all directions, and floundered about famously. On the whole, it was considered to have been the severest mental exercise ever heard in the National Hotel. Tears stood in the shrill boy's eyes several times; and the whole company observed that their heads ached with the effort—as well they might.

When it at last became necessary to release Elijah Pogram from the corner, and the Committee saw him safely back again to the next room, they were fervent in their admiration.

"Which," said Mr. Buffum, "must have vent, or it will bust. Toc you, Mr. Pogram, I am grateful. Toc-wards you, sir, I am inspired with lofty veneration, and with deep e-mo-tion. The sentiment Toc which I would propose to give ex-pression, sir, is this: 'May you ever be as firm, sir, as your marble statter! May it ever be as great a terror Toc its ene-mies as you.'"

There is some reason to suppose that it was rather terrible to its friends; being a statue of the Elevated or Goblin School, in which the Honourable Elijah Pogram was represented as in a very high wind, with his hair all standing on end, and his nostrils blown wide open. But Mr. Pogram thanked his friend and countryman for the aspiration to which he had given utterance, and the Committee, after another solemn shaking of hands, retired to bed, except the

Doctor: who immediately repaired to the newspaper office, and there wrote a short poem, suggested by the events of the evening, beginning with fourteen stars, and headed, "A Fragment. Suggested by witnessing the Honourable Elijah Pogram engaged in a philosophical disputation with three of Columbia's fairest daughters. By Doctor Ginery Dunkle. Of Troy."

If Pogram was as glad to get to bed as Martin was, he must have been well rewarded for his labours. They started off again next day (Martin and Mark previously disposing of their goods to the storekeepers of whom they had purchased them, for anything they would bring), and were fellow-travellers to within a short distance of New York. When Pogram was about to leave them he grew thoughtful, and after pondering for some time, took Martin aside.

"We air going to part, sir," said Pogram.

"Pray don't distress yourself," said Martin: "we must bear it."

"It ain't that, sir," returned Pogram, "not at all. But I should wish you to accept a copy of My oration."

"Thank you," said Martin, "you are very good. I shall be most happy."

"It ain't quite that, sir, neither," resumed Pogram: "air you bold enough to introduce a copy into your country?"

"Certainly," said Martin. "Why not?"

"Its sentiments air strong, sir," hinted Pogram, darkly.

"That makes no difference," said Martin. "I'll take a dozen if you like."

"No, sir," retorted Pogram. "Not A dozen. That is more than I require. If you are content to run the hazard, sir, here is one for your Lord Chancellor," producing it, "and one for Your principal Secretary of State. I should wish them to see it, sir, as expressing what my opinions air. That they may not plead ignorance at a future time. But don't get into danger, sir, on my account!"

"There is not the least danger, I assure you," said Martin. So he put the pamphlets in his pocket, and they parted.

Mr. Bevan had written in his letter that, at a certain time, which fell out happily just then, he would be at a certain hotel in the city, anxiously expecting to see them. To this place they repaired without a moment's delay. They had the satisfaction of finding him within; and of being received, by their good friend, with his own warmth and heartiness.

"I am truly sorry and ashamed," said Martin, "to have begged of you. But look at us. See what we are, and judge to what we are reduced!"

"So far from claiming to have done you any service," returned the other, "I reproach myself with having been, unwittingly, the original cause of your misfortunes. I no more supposed you would go to Eden on such representations as you received; or, indeed, that you would do anything but be dispossessed, by the readiest means, of your idea that fortunes were so easily made here; than I thought of going to Eden myself."

"The fact is, I closed with the thing in a mad and sanguine manner," said Martin, "and the less said about it the better for me. Mark, here, hadn't a voice in the matter."

"Well! But he hadn't a voice in any other matter, had he?" returned Mr. Bevan: laughing with an air that showed his understanding of Mark and Martin too.

"Not a very powerful one, I am afraid," said Martin with a blush. "But live and learn, Mr. Bevan! Nearly die and learn: and we learn the quicker."

"Now," said their friend, "about your plans. You mean to return home at once?"

"Oh, I think so," returned Martin hastily, for he turned pale at the thought of any other suggestion. "That is your opinion too, I hope?"

"Unquestionably. For I don't know why you ever came here; though it's not such an unusual case, I am sorry to say, that we need go any farther into that. You don't know that the ship in which you came over, with our friend General Fladdock, is in Port; of course?"

"Indeed!" said Martin.

"Yes. And is advertised to sail to-morrow."

This was tempting news, but tantalising too; for Martin knew that his getting any employment on board a ship of that class was hopeless. The money in his pocket would not pay one-fourth of the sum he had already borrowed, and if it had been enough for their passage-money, he could hardly have resolved to spend it. He explained this to Mr. Bevan, and stated what their project was.

"Why, that's as wild as Eden every bit," returned his friend. "You must take your passage like a Christian; at least, as like a Christian as a fore-cabin passenger can; and owe me a few more dollars than you intend. If Mark will go down to the ship and see what passengers there are, and finds that you can go in her, without being actually suffocated; my advice is, go! You and I will look about us in the meantime (we won't call at the Norris's unless you like), and we will all three dine together, in the afternoon."

Martin had nothing to express but gratitude,

and so it was arranged. But he went out of the room after Mark, and advised him to take their passage in the *Screw*, though they lay upon the bare deck; which Mr. Tapley, who needed no entreaty on the subject, readily promised to do.

When he and Martin met again, and were alone, he was in high spirits, and evidently had something to communicate, in which he gloried very much.

"I've done Mr. Bevan, sir," said Mark.

"Done Mr. Bevan!" repeated Martin.

"The cook of the *Screw* went and got married yesterday, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

Martin looked at him for farther explanation.

"And when I got on board, and the word was passed that it was me," said Mark, "the mate he comes and asks me whether I'd engage to take this said cook's place upon the passage home. 'For you're used to it,' he says: 'you were always a cooking for everybody on your passage out.' And so I was," said Mark, "although I never cooked before, I'll take my oath."

"What did you say?" demanded Martin.

"Say!" cried Mark. "That I'd take anything I could get. 'If that's so,' says the mate, 'why, bring a glass of rum;' which they brought according. And my wages, sir," said Mark in high glee, "pays your passage; and I've put the rolling-pin in your berth to take it (it's the easy one up in the corner): and there we are, Rule Britannia, and Britons strike home!"

"There never was such a good fellow as you are!" cried Martin, seizing him by the hand. "But what do you mean by 'doing' Mr. Bevan, Mark?"

"Why, don't you see," said Mark. "We don't tell him, you know. We take his money, but we don't spend it, and we don't keep it. What we do is, write him a little note, explaining this engagement, and roll it up, and leave it at the bar, to be given to him after we are gone. Don't you see?"

Martin's delight in this idea was not inferior to Mark's. It was all done as he proposed. They passed a cheerful evening; slept at the hotel; left the letter as arranged; and went off to the ship betimes next morning, with such light hearts, as the weight of their past misery engendered.

"Good bye! a hundred thousand times good bye!" said Martin to their friend. "How shall I remember all your kindness! How shall I ever thank you!"

"If you ever become a rich man, or a powerful one," returned his friend, "you shall try to make your Government more careful of its sub-

jects when they roam abroad to live. Tell it what you know of emigration in your own case, and impress upon it how much suffering may be prevented with a little pains!"

Cheerily lads, cheerily! Anchor weighed. Ship in full sail. Her sturdy bowsprit pointing true to England. America a cloud upon the sea behind them!

"Why Cook! what are you thinking of so steadily?" said Martin.

"Why I was a thinking, sir," returned Mark, "that if I was a painter and was called upon to paint the American Eagle, how should I do it?"

"Paint it as like an Eagle as you could, I suppose."

"No," said Mark. "That wouldn't do for me, sir. I should want to draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness; like a Bantam, for its bragging; like a Magpie, for its honesty; like a Peacock, for its vanity; like an Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud, and thinking nobody sees it—"

"And like a Phoenix, for its power of springing from the ashes of its faults and vices, and soaring up anew into the sky!" said Martin. "Well Mark. Let us hope so."

CHAPTER XXXV.

ARRIVING IN ENGLAND, MARTIN WITNESSES A CEREMONY, FROM WHICH HE DERIVES THE CHEERING INFORMATION THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN IN HIS ABSENCE.

IT was mid-day, and high-water in the English port for which the Screw was bound, when, borne in gallantly upon the fullness of the tide, she let go her anchor in the river.

Bright as the scene was; fresh, and full of motion; airy, free, and sparkling; it was nothing to the life and exultation in the breasts of the two travellers, at sight of the old churches, roofs, and darkened chimney stacks of Home. The distant roar, that swelled up hoarsely from the busy streets, was music in their ears; the lines of people gazing from the wharves, were friends held dear; the canopy of smoke that overhung the town, was brighter and more beautiful to them, than if the richest silks of Persia had been waving in the air. And though the water, going on its glistening track, turned, ever and again, aside, to dance and sparkle round great ships, and heave them up; and leaped from off the blades of oars, a shower of diving diamonds;

and wantoned with the idle boats, and swiftly passed, in many a sportive chase, through obdurate old iron rings, set deep into the stonework of the quays; not even it, was half so buoyant, and so restless, as their fluttering hearts, when yearning to set foot, once more, on native ground.

A year had passed, since those same spires and roofs had faded from their eyes. It seemed, to them, a dozen years. Some trifling changes, here and there, they called to mind; and wondered that they were so few and slight. In health and fortune, prospect and resource, they came back poorer men than they had gone away. But it was home. And though home is a name, a word, it is a strong one; stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit answered to, in strongest conjuration.

Being set ashore, with very little money in their pockets, and no definite plan of operation in their heads, they sought out a cheap tavern, where they regaled upon a smoking steak, and certain flowing mugs of beer, as only men just landed from the sea can revel in the generous dainties of the earth. When they had feasted, as two grateful-tempered giants might have done, they stirred the fire, drew back the glowing curtain from the window, and making each a sofa for himself, by union of the great unwieldy chairs, gazed blissfully into the street.

Even the street was made a fairy street, by being half-hidden in an atmosphere of steak, and strong, stout, stand-up English beer. For, on the window-glass hung such a mist, that Mr. Tapley was obliged to rise and wipe it with his handkerchief, before the passengers appeared like common mortals. And even then a spiral little cloud went curling up from their two glasses of hot grog, which nearly hid them from each other.

It was one of those unaccountable little rooms which are never seen anywhere but in a tavern, and are supposed to have got into taverns by reason of the facilities afforded to the architect for getting drunk while engaged in their construction. It had more corners in it than the brain of an obstinate man; was full of mad closets, into which nothing could be put that was not specially invented and made for that purpose; had mysterious shelvings and bulk-heads, and indications of staircases in the ceiling; and was elaborately provided with a bell that rung in the room itself, about two feet from the handle, and had no connection whatever with any other part of the establishment. It was a little below the pavement, and abutted close upon it; so that passengers grated against

the window-panes with their buttons, and scraped it with their baskets ; and fearful boys suddenly coming between a thoughtful guest and the light, derided him, or put out their tongues as if he were a physician ; or made white knobs on the ends of their noses by flattening the same against the glass, and vanished awfully, like spectres.

Martin and Mark sat looking at the people as they passed, debating, every now and then, what their first step should be.

"We want to see Miss Mary, of course," said Mark.

"Of course," said Martin. "But I don't know where she is. Not having had the heart to write in our distress—you yourself thought silence most advisable—and consequently, never having heard from her since we left New York the first time, I don't know where she is, my good fellow."

"My opinion is, sir," returned Mark, "that what we've got to do, is to travel straight to the Dragon. There's no need for you to go there, where you're known, unless you like. You may stop ten mile short of it. I'll go on. Mrs. Lupin will tell me all the news. Mr. Pinch will give me every information that we want : and right glad Mr. Pinch will be to do it. My proposal is : To set off walking this afternoon. To stop when we are tired. To get a lift when we can. To walk when we can't. To do it at once, and do it cheap."

"Unless we do it cheap, we shall have some difficulty in doing it at all," said Martin, pulling out the bank, and telling it over in his hand.

"The greater reason for losing no time, sir," replied Mark. "Whereas, when you've seen the young lady ; and know what state of mind the old gentleman's in, and all about it ; then you'll know what to do next."

"No doubt," said Martin. "You are quite right."

They were raising their glasses to their lips, when their hands stopped midway, and their gaze was arrested by a figure, which slowly, very slowly, and reflectively, passed the window at that moment.

Mr. Pecksniff. Placid, calm, but proud. Honestly proud. Dressed with peculiar care, smiling with even more than usual blandness, pondering on the beauties of his art with a mild abstraction from all sordid thoughts, and gently travelling across the disc, as if he were a figure in a magic lantern.

As Mr. Pecksniff passed, a person coming in the opposite direction stopped to look after him with great interest and respect : almost with veneration : and the landlord bouncing out of

the house, as if he had seen him too, joined this person, and spoke to him, and shook his head gravely, and looked after Mr. Pecksniff likewise.

Martin and Mark sat staring at each other, as if they could not believe it ; but there stood the landlord, and the other man still. In spite of the indignation with which this glimpse of Mr. Pecksniff had inspired him, Martin could not help laughing heartily. Neither could Mark.

"We must inquire into this !" said Martin. "Ask the landlord in, Mark."

Mr. Tapley retired for that purpose, and immediately returned with their large-headed host in safe convoy.

"Pray, landlord !" said Martin, "who is that gentleman who passed just now, and whom you were looking after?"

The landlord poked the fire as if, in his desire to make the most of his answer, he had become indifferent even to the price of coals ; and putting his hands in his pockets, said, after inflating himself to give still further effect to his reply :

"That, gentlemen, is the great Mr. Pecksniff ! The celebrated architect, gentlemen !"

He looked from one to the other while he said it, as if he were ready to assist the first man who might be overcome by the intelligence.

"The great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, gentlemen," said the landlord, "has come down here, to help to lay the first stone of a new and splendid public building."

"Is it to be built from his designs?" asked Martin.

"The great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, gentlemen," returned the landlord, who seemed to have an unspeakable delight in the repetition of these words, "carried off the First Premium, and will erect the building."

"Who lays the stone?" asked Martin.

"Our member has come down express," returned the landlord. "No scrubs would do for no such a purpose. Nothing less would satisfy our Directors than our member in the House of Commons, who is returned upon the Gentlemanly Interest."

"Which interest is that?" asked Martin.

"What, don't you know !" returned the landlord.

It was quite clear the landlord didn't. They always told him at election time, that it was the Gentlemanly side, and he immediately put on his top-boots, and voted for it.

"When does the ceremony take place?" asked Martin.

"This day," replied the landlord. Then pulling out his watch, he added impressively, "almost this minute."

Martin hastily inquired whether there was any possibility of getting in to witness it; and finding that there would be no objection to the admittance of any decent person, unless indeed the ground were full, hurried off with Mark, as hard as they could go.

They were fortunate enough to squeeze themselves into a famous corner on the ground, where they could see all that passed, without much dread of being beheld by Mr. Pecksniff in return. They were not a minute too soon, for as they were in the act of congratulating each other, a great noise was heard at some distance, and everybody looked towards the gate. Several ladies prepared their pocket-handkerchiefs for waving; and a stray teacher belonging to the charity school being much cheered by mistake, was immensely groaned at when detected.

"Perhaps he has Tom Pinch with him," Martin whispered Mr. Tapley.

"It would be rather too much of a treat for him, wouldn't it, sir?" whispered Mr. Tapley in return.

There was no time to discuss the probabilities either way, for the charity school, in clean linen, came filing in two and two, so much to the self-approval of all the people present who didn't subscribe to it, that many of them shed tears. A band of music followed, led by a conscientious drummer who never left off. Then came a great many gentlemen with wands in their hands, and bows on their breasts, whose share in the proceedings did not appear to be distinctly laid down, and who trod upon each other, and blocked up the entry for a considerable period. These were followed by the Mayor and Corporation, all clustering round the member for the Gentlemanly Interest; who had the great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, on his right hand, and conversed with him familiarly as they came along. Then the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the gentlemen their hats, and the charity children shrieked, and the member for the Gentlemanly Interest bowed.

Silence being restored, the member for the Gentlemanly Interest rubbed his hands, and wagged his head, and looked about him pleasantly; and there was nothing this member did, at which some lady or other did not burst into an ecstatic waving of her pocket handkerchief. When he looked up at the stone, they said how graceful! when he

peeped into the hole, they said how condescending! when he chatted with the Mayor, they said how easy! when he folded his arms they cried with one accord, how statesman-like!

Mr. Pecksniff was observed too; closely. When he talked to the Mayor, they said, Oh, really, what a courtly man he was! When he laid his hand upon the mason's shoulder, giving him directions, how pleasant his demeanour to the working classes: just the sort of man who made their toil a pleasure to them, poor dear souls!

But now a silver trowel was brought; and when the member for the Gentlemanly Interest, tucking up his coat-sleeve, did a little sleight-of-hand with the mortar, the air was rent, so loud was the applause. The workman-like manner in which he did it was amazing. No one could conceive where such a gentlemanly creature could have picked the knowledge up.

When he had made a kind of dirt-pie under the direction of the mason, they brought a little vase containing coins, the which the member of the Gentlemanly Interest jingled, as if he were going to conjure. Whereat they said how droll, how cheerful, what a flow of spirits! This put into its place, an ancient scholar read the inscription, which was in Latin: not in English: that would never do. It gave great satisfaction; especially every time there was a good long substantive in the third declension, ablative case, with an adjective to match; at which periods the assembly became very tender, and were much affected.

And now the stone was lowered down into its place, amidst the shouting of the concourse. When it was firmly fixed, the member for the Gentlemanly Interest struck upon it thrice with the handle of the trowel, as if inquiring, with a touch of humour, whether anybody was at home. Mr. Pecksniff then unrolled his Plans (prodigious plans they were), and people gathered round to look at and admire them.

Martin, who had been fretting himself—quite unnecessarily, as Mark thought—during the whole of these proceedings, could no longer restrain his impatience; but stepping forward among several others, looked straight over the shoulder of the unconscious Mr. Pecksniff, at the designs and plans he had unrolled. He returned to Mark, boiling with rage.

"Why, what's the matter, sir?" cried Mark.

"Matter! This is *my* building."

"Your building, sir!" said Mark.

"My grammar-school. I invented it. I did it all. He has only put four windows in, the villain, and spoilt it!"

Mark could hardly believe it at first, but being assured that it was really so, actually held him to prevent his interference foolishly, until his temporary heat was passed. In the mean time, the member addressed the company on the gratifying deed which he had just performed.

He said that since he had sat in Parliament to represent the Gentlemanly Interest of that town; and he might add, the Lady Interest he hoped, besides (pocket handkerchiefs); it had been his pleasant duty to come among them,

and to raise his voice on their behalf in Another Place (pocket handkerchiefs and laughter), often. But he had never come among them, and had never raised his voice, with half such pure, such deep, such unalloyed delight, as now. "The present occasion," he said, "will ever be memorable to me: not only for the reasons I have assigned, but because it has afforded me an opportunity of becoming personally known to a gentleman—"

Here he pointed the trowel to Mr. Pecksniff,



"MR. PECKSNIFF. PLACID, CALM, BUT PROUD. HONESTLY PROUD. . . . GENTLY TRAVELLING ACROSS THE DISC, AS IF HE WERE A FIGURE IN A MAGIC LANTERN."

who was greeted with vociferous cheering, and laid his hand upon his heart.

"To a gentleman who, I am happy to believe, will reap both distinction and profit from this field: whose fame had previously penetrated to me—as to whose ears has it not!—but whose intellectual countenance I never had the distinguished honour to behold until this day, and whose intellectual conversation I had never before the improving pleasure to enjoy."

Everybody seemed very glad of this, and applauded more than ever.

"But I hope my Honourable Friend," said the Gentlemanly member—of course he added

'if he will allow me to call him so,' and of course Mr. Pecksniff bowed—"will give me many opportunities of cultivating the knowledge of him; and that I may have the extraordinary gratification of reflecting in after time that I laid on this day two first stones, both belonging to structures which shall last my life!"

Great cheering again. All this time, Martin was cursing Mr. Pecksniff up hill and down dale.

"My friends!" said Mr. Pecksniff, in reply. "My duty is to build, not speak; to act, not talk; to deal with marble, stone, and brick: not language. I am very much affected. God bless you!"

This address, pumped out apparently from Mr. Pecksniff's very heart, brought the enthusiasm to its highest pitch. The pocket handkerchiefs were waved again; the charity children were admonished to grow up Pecksniffs, every boy among them; the corporation, gentlemen with wands, member for the Gentlemanly Interest, all cheered for Mr. Pecksniff. Three cheers for Mr. Pecksniff! Three more for Mr. Pecksniff! Three more for Mr. Pecksniff, gentlemen, if you please! One more, gentlemen, for Mr. Pecksniff, and let it be a good one to finish with!

In short, Mr. Pecksniff was supposed to have done a great work, and was very kindly, courteously, and generously rewarded. When the procession moved away, and Martin and Mark were left almost alone upon the ground, his merits and a desire to acknowledge them formed the common topic. He was only second to the Gentlemanly member.

"Compare that fellow's situation to-day, with ours!" said Martin, bitterly.

"Lord bless you, sir!" cried Mark, "what's the use! Some architects are clever at making foundations, and some architects are clever at building on 'em when they're made. But it'll all come right in the end, sir; it'll all come right!"


"And in the mean time—" began Martin.

"In the mean time, as you say, sir, we have a deal to do, and far to go. So sharp's the word, and Jolly!"

"You are the best master in the world, Mark," said Martin, "and I will not be a bad scholar if I can help it, I am resolved! So come! Best foot foremost, old fellow!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TOM PINCH DEPARTS TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE. WHAT HE FINDS AT STARTING.

H! what a different town Salisbury was in Tom Pinch's eyes to be sure, when the substantial Pecksniff of his heart melted away into an idle dream! He possessed the same faith in the wonderful shops, the same intensified appreciation of the mystery and wickedness of the place; made the same exalted estimate of its wealth, population and resources; and yet it was not the old city, nor anything like it. He walked into the market while they were getting breakfast ready

for him at the Inn: and though it was the same market as of old, crowded by the same buyers and sellers; brisk with the same business; noisy with the same confusion of tongues and clattering of fowls in coops; fair with the same display of rolls of butter, newly made, set forth in linen cloths of dazzling whiteness; green with the same fresh show of dewy vegetables; dainty with the same array in higgler's baskets of small shaving-glasses, laces, braces, trouser-straps, and hardware; savoury with the same unstinted show of delicate pigs' feet, and pies made precious by the pork that once had walked upon them: still it was strangely changed to Tom. For, in the centre of the market-place, he missed a statue he had set up there, as in all other places of his personal resort; and it looked cold and bare without that ornament.

The change lay no deeper than this, for Tom was far from being sage enough to know, that, having been disappointed in one man, it would have been a strictly rational and eminently wise proceeding to have revenged himself upon mankind in general, by mistrusting them one and all. Indeed this piece of justice, though it is upheld by the authority of divers profound poets and honourable men, bears a nearer resemblance to the justice of that good Vizier in the Thousand-and-one Nights, who issues orders for the destruction of all the Porters in Bagdad because one of that unfortunate fraternity is supposed to have misconducted himself, than to any logical, not to say Christian system of conduct, known to the world in later times.

Tom had so long been used to steep the Pecksniff of his fancy in his tea, and spread him out upon his toast, and take him as a relish with his beer, that he made but a poor breakfast on the first morning after his expulsion. Nor did he much improve his appetite for dinner by seriously considering his own affairs, and taking counsel thereon with his friend the organist's assistant.

The organist's assistant gave it as his decided opinion that whatever Tom did, he must go to London; for there was no place like it. Which may be true in the main, though hardly, perhaps, in itself, a sufficient reason for Tom's going there.

But Tom had thought of London before, and had coupled with it thoughts of his sister, and of his old friend John Westlock, whose advice he naturally felt disposed to seek in this important crisis of his fortunes. To London, therefore, he resolved to go; and he went away to the coach-office at once, to secure his place. The coach being already full, he was obliged to postpone his departure till the next night; but even this cir-

cumstance had its bright side as well as its dark one, for though it threatened to reduce his poor purse with unexpected country charges, it afforded him an opportunity of writing to Mrs. Lupin and appointing his box to be brought to the old-finger post at the old time; which would enable him to take that treasure with him to the metropolis, and save the expense of its carriage. "So," said Tom, comforting himself, "it's very nearly as broad as it's long."

And it cannot be denied that, when he had made up his mind to even this extent, he felt an unaccustomed sense of freedom—a vague and indistinct impression of holiday-making—which was very luxurious. He had his moments of depression and anxiety, and they were, with good reason, pretty numerous; but still, it was wonderfully pleasant to reflect that he was his own master, and could plan and scheme for himself. It was startling, thrilling, vast, difficult to understand; it was a stupendous truth, teeming with responsibility and self-distrust; but, in spite of all his cares, it gave a curious relish to the viands at the Inn, and interposed a dreamy haze between him and his prospects, in which they sometimes showed to magical advantage.

In this unsettled state of mind, Tom went once more to bed in the low four-poster, to the same immovable surprise of the effigies of the former landlord and the fat ox; and in this condition, passed the whole of the succeeding day. When the coach came round at last, with "London" blazoned in letters of gold upon the boot, it gave Tom such a turn, that he was half disposed to run away. But he didn't do it; for he took his seat upon the box instead, and looking down upon the four grays, felt as if he were another gray himself, or, at all events, a part of the turn-out; and was quite confused by the novelty and splendour of his situation.

And really it might have confused a less modest man than Tom to find himself sitting next that coachman; for of all the swells that ever flourished a whip, professionally, he might have been elected Emperor. He didn't handle his gloves like another man, but put them on—even when he was standing on the pavement, quite detached from the coach—as if the four grays were, somehow or other, at the ends of the fingers. It was the same with his hat. He did things with his hat, which nothing but an unlimited knowledge of horses and the wildest freedom of the road could ever have made him perfect in. Valuable little parcels were brought to him with particular instructions, and he pitched them into this hat, and stuck it on again; as if the laws of gravity did not admit of

such an event as its being knocked off or blown off, and nothing like an accident could befall it. The guard, too! Seventy breezy miles a-day were written in his very whiskers. His manners were a canter; his conversation a round trot. He was a fast coach upon a down-hill turnpike road; he was all pace. A waggon couldn't have moved slowly, with that guard and his key-bugle on the top of it.

These were all foreshadowings of London, Tom thought, as he sat upon the box, and looked about him. Such a coachman, and such a guard, never could have existed between Salisbury and any other place. The coach was none of your steady-going, yokel coaches, but a swaggering, rakish, dissipated London coach; up all night, and lying by all day, and leading a devil of a life. It cared no more for Salisbury than if it had been a hamlet. It rattled noisily through the best streets, defied the Cathedral, took the worst corners sharpest, went cutting in everywhere, making everything get out of its way; and spun along the open country-road, blowing a lively defiance out of its key-bugle, as its last glad parting legacy.

It was a charming evening. Mild and bright. And even with the weight upon his mind which arose out of the immensity and uncertainty of London, Tom could not resist the captivating sense of rapid motion through the pleasant air. The four grays skimmed along, as if they liked it quite as well as Tom did; the bugle was in as high spirits as the grays; the coachman chimed in sometimes with his voice; the wheels hummed cheerfully in unison; the brass work on the harness was an orchestra of little bells; and thus, as they went clinking, jingling, rattling smoothly on, the whole concern, from the buckles of the leaders' coupling-reins to the handle of the hind boot, was one great instrument of music.

Yoho, past hedges, gates, and trees; past cottages and barns, and people going home from work. Yoho, past donkey-chaises, drawn aside into the ditch, and empty carts with rampant horses, whipped up at a bound upon the little watercourse, and held by struggling carters close to the five-barred gate, until the coach had passed the narrow turning in the road. Yoho, by churches dropped down by themselves in quiet nooks, with rustic burial-grounds about them, where the graves are green and daisies sleep—for it is evening—on the bosoms of the dead. Yoho, past streams, in which the cattle cool their feet, and where the rushes grow; past paddock-fences, farms, and rick-yards; past last year's stacks, cut, slice by slice, away, and showing, in the waning light, like ruined gables, old and

brown. Yoho, down the pebbly dip, and through the merry water-splash, and up at a canter to the level road again. Yoho! Yoho!

Was the box there, when they came up to the old finger-post? The box! Was Mrs. Lupin herself? Had she turned out magnificently as a hostess should, in her own chaise-cart, and was she sitting in a mahogany chair, driving her own horse Dragon (who ought to have been called Dumpling), and looking lovely? Did the stage-coach pull up beside her, shaving her very wheel, and even while the guard helped her man up with the trunk, did he send the glad echoes of his bugle careering down the chimneys of the distant Pecksniff, as if the coach expressed its exultation in the rescue of Tom Pinch?

"This is kind indeed!" said Tom, bending down to shake hands with her. "I didn't mean to give you this trouble."

"Trouble, Mr. Pinch!" cried the hostess of the Dragon.

"Well! It's a pleasure to you, I know," said Tom, squeezing her hand heartily. "Is there any news?"

The hostess shook her head.

"Say you saw me," said Tom, "and that I was very bold and cheerful, and not a bit down-hearted; and that I entreated her to be the same, for all is certain to come right at last. Good bye!"

"You'll write when you get settled, Mr. Pinch?" said Mrs. Lupin.

"When I get settled!" cried Tom, with an involuntary opening of his eyes. "Oh, yes, I'll write when I get settled. Perhaps I had better write before, because I may find that it takes a little time to settle myself; not having too much money, and having only one friend. I shall give your love to the friend, by the way. You were always great with Mr. Westlock, you know. Good bye!"

"Good bye!" said Mrs. Lupin, hastily producing a basket with a long bottle sticking out of it. "Take this. Good bye!"

"Do you want me to carry it to London for you?" cried Tom. She was already turning the chaise-cart round.

"No, no," said Mrs. Lupin. "It's only a little something for refreshment on the road. Sit fast, Jack. Drive on, sir. All right! Good bye!"

She was a quarter of a mile off, before Tom collected himself; and then he was waving his hand lustily; and so was she.

"And that's the last of the old finger-post," thought Tom, straining his eyes, "where I have so often stood, to see this very coach go by, and

where I have parted with so many companions! I used to compare this coach to some great monster that appeared at certain times to bear my friends away into the world. And now it's bearing me away, to seek my fortune, Heaven knows where and how!"

It made Tom melancholy to picture himself walking up the lane and back to Pecksniff's as of old; and being melancholy, he looked downwards at the basket on his knee, which he had for the moment forgotten.

"She is the kindest and most considerate creature in the world," thought Tom. "Now I know that she particularly told that man of hers not to look at me, on purpose to prevent my throwing him a shilling! I had it ready for him all the time, and he never once looked towards me; whereas that man naturally (for I know him very well) would have done nothing but grin and stare. Upon my word, the kindness of people perfectly melts me."

Here he caught the coachman's eye. The coachman winked. "Remarkable fine woman for her time of life," said the coachman.

"I quite agree with you," returned Tom. "So she is."

"Finer than many a young 'un, I mean to say," observed the coachman. "Eh?"

"Than many a young one," Tom assented.

"I don't care for 'em myself when they're too young," remarked the coachman.

This was a matter of taste, which Tom did not feel himself called upon to discuss.

"You'll seldom find 'em possessing correct opinions about refreshment, for instance, when they're too young, you know," said the coachman: "a woman must have arrived at maturity, before her mind's equal to coming provided with a basket like that."

"Perhaps you would like to know what it contains?" said Tom, smiling.

As the coachman only laughed, and as Tom was curious himself, he unpacked it, and put the articles, one by one, upon the footboard. A cold roast fowl, a packet of ham in slices, a crusty loaf, a piece of cheese, a paper of biscuits, half a dozen apples, a knife, some butter, a screw of salt, and a bottle of old sherry. There was a letter besides, which Tom put in his pocket.

The coachman was so earnest in his approval of Mrs. Lupin's provident habits, and congratulated Tom so warmly on his good fortune, that Tom felt it necessary, for the lady's sake, to explain that the basket was a strictly Platonic basket, and had merely been presented to him in the way of friendship. When he had made

the statement with perfect gravity; for he felt it incumbent on him to disabuse the mind of this lax rover of any incorrect impressions on the subject; he signified that he would be happy to share the gifts with him, and proposed that they should attack the basket in a spirit of good fellowship at any time in the course of the night which the coachman's experience and knowledge of the road might suggest, as being best adapted to the purpose. From this time they chatted so pleasantly together, that although Tom knew infinitely more of unicorns than horses, the coachman informed his friend the guard, at the end of the next stage, "that rum as the box-seat looked, he was as good a one to go, in pint of conversation, as ever he'd wish to sit by."

Yoho, among the gathering shades; making of no account the deep reflections of the trees, but scampering on through light and darkness, all the same, as if the light of London fifty miles away, were quite enough to travel by, and some to spare. Yoho, beside the village-green, where cricket-players linger yet, and every little indentation made in the fresh grass by bat or wicket, ball or player's foot, sheds out its perfume on the night. Away with four fresh horses from the Bald-faced Stag, where toppers congregate about the door admiring; and the last team with traces hanging loose, go roaming off towards the pond, until observed and shouted after by a dozen throats, while volunteering boys pursue them. Now, with a clattering of hoofs and striking out of fiery sparks, across the old stone bridge, and down again into the shadowy road, and through the open gate, and far away, away, into the wold. Yoho!

Yoho, behind there, stop that bugle for a moment! Come creeping over to the front, along the coach-roof, guard, and make one at this basket! Not that we slacken in our pace the while, not we: we rather put the bits of blood upon their mettle, for the greater glory of the snack. Ah! It is long since this bottle of old wine was brought into contact with the mellow breath of night, you may depend, and rare good stuff it is to wet a bugler's whistle with. Only try it. Don't be afraid of turning up your finger, Bill, another pull! Now, take your breath, and try the bugle, Bill. There's music! There's a tone! "Over the hills and far away," indeed. Yoho! The skittish mare is all alive to-night. Yoho! Yoho!

See the bright moon! High up before we know it: making the earth reflect the objects on its breast like water. Hedges, trees, low cottages, church steeples, blighted stumps, and

flourishing young slips, have all grown vain upon the sudden, and mean to contemplate their own fair images till morning. The poplars yonder rustle, that their quivering leaves may see themselves upon the ground. Not so the oak; trembling does not become *him*; and he watches himself in his stout old burly steadfastness, without the motion of a twig. The moss-grown gate, ill-poised upon its creaking hinges, crippled and decayed, swings to and fro before its glass, like some fantastic dowager; while our own ghostly likeness travels on, Yoho! Yoho! through ditch and brake, upon the ploughed land and the smooth, along the steep hill-side and steeper wall, as if it were a phantom-Hunter.

Clouds too! And a mist upon the hollow! Not a dull fog that hides it, but a light airy gauze-like mist, which in our eyes of modest admiration gives a new charm to the beauties it is spread before: as real gauze has done ere now, and would again, so please you, though we were the Pope. Yoho! Why now we travel like the Moon herself. Hiding this minute in a grove of trees; next minute in a patch of vapour; emerging now upon our broad clear course; withdrawing now, but always dashing on, our journey is a counterpart of hers. Yoho! A match against the Moon!

The beauty of the night is hardly felt, when Day comes leaping up. Yoho! Two stages, and the country roads are almost changed to a continuous street. Yoho, past market-gardens, rows of houses, villas, crescents, terraces, and squares; past waggons, coaches, carts; past early workmen, late stragglers, drunken men, and sober carriers of loads; past brick and mortar in its every shape; and in among the rattling pavements, where a jaunty-seat upon a coach is not so easy to preserve! Yoho, down countless turnings, and through countless mazy ways, until an old Inn-yard is gained, and Tom Pinch, getting down, quite stunned and giddy, is in London!

"Five minutes before the time, too!" said the driver, as he received his fee of Tom.

"Upon my word," said Tom, "I should not have minded very much, if we had been five hours after it; for at this early hour I don't know where to go, or what to do with myself."

"Don't they expect you then?" inquired the driver.

"Who?" said Tom.

"Why, them," returned the driver.

His mind was so clearly running on the assumption of Tom's having come to town to see an extensive circle of anxious relations and

friends, that it would have been pretty hard work to undeceive him. Tom did not try. He cheerfully evaded the subject, and going into the Inn fell fast asleep before a fire in one of the public rooms opening from the yard. When he awoke, the people in the house were all astir, so he washed and dressed himself; to his great refreshment after the journey; and, it being by that time eight o'clock, went forth at once to see his old friend John.

John Westlock lived in Furnival's Inn, High Holborn, which was within a quarter of an hour's walk of Tom's starting point, but seemed a long way off, by reason of his going two or three miles out of the straight road to make a short cut. When at last he arrived outside John's door, two stories up, he stood faltering with his hand upon the knocker, and trembled from head to foot. For he was rendered very nervous by the thought of having to relate what had fallen out between himself and Pecksniff; and he had a misgiving that John would exult fearfully in the disclosure.

"But it must be made," thought Tom, "sooner or later; and I had better get it over."

Rat tat.

"I am afraid that's not a London knock," thought Tom. "It didn't sound bold. Perhaps that's the reason why nobody answers the door."

It is quite certain that nobody came, and that Tom stood looking at the knocker: wondering whereabouts in the neighbourhood a certain gentleman resided, who was roaring out to somebody, "Come in!" with all his might.

"Bless my soul!" thought Tom at last. "Perhaps he lives here, and is calling to me. I never thought of that. Can I open the door from the outside, I wonder? Yes, to be sure I can."

To be sure he could, by turning the handle: and to be sure when he did turn it, the same voice came rushing out, crying "Why don't you come in? Come in, do you hear? What are you standing there for?"—quite violently.

Tom stepped from the little passage into the room from which these sounds proceeded, and had barely caught a glimpse of a gentleman in a dressing-gown and slippers (with his boots beside him ready to put on), sitting at his breakfast with a newspaper in his hand, when the said gentleman, at the imminent hazard of over-setting his tea-table, made a plunge at Tom, and hugged him.

"Why, Tom, my boy!" cried the gentleman. "Tom!"

"How glad I am to see you, Mr. Westlock!"

said Tom Pinch, shaking both his hands, and trembling more than ever. "How kind you are!"

"Mr. Westlock!" repeated John, "what do you mean by that, Pinch? You have not forgotten my Christian name, I suppose?"

"No, John, no. I have not forgotten it," said Thomas Pinch. "Good gracious me, how kind you are!"

"I never saw such a fellow in all my life!" cried John. "What do you mean by saying *that* over and over again? What did you expect me to be, I wonder! Here, sit down, Tom, and be a reasonable creature. How are you, my boy? I am delighted to see you!"

"And I am delighted to see *you*," said Tom.

"It's mutual of course," returned John. "It always was, I hope. If I had known you had been coming, Tom, I would have had something for breakfast. I would rather have such a surprise than the best breakfast in the world, myself; but yours is another case, and I have no doubt you are as hungry as a hunter. You must make out as well as you can, Tom, and we'll recompense ourselves at dinner time. You take sugar I know: I recollect the sugar at Pecksniff's. Ha, ha, ha! How *is* Pecksniff? When did you come to town? *Do* begin at something or other, Tom. There are only scraps here, but they are not at all bad. Boar's Head potted. Try it, Tom! Make a beginning whatever you do. What an old Blade you are! I am delighted to see you."

While he delivered himself of these words in a state of great commotion, John was constantly running backwards and forwards to and from the closet, bringing out all sorts of things in pots, scooping extraordinary quantities of tea out of the caddy, dropping French rolls into his boots, pouring hot water over the butter, and making a variety of similar mistakes without disconcerting himself in the least.

"There!" said John, sitting down for the fiftieth time, and instantly starting up again to make some other addition to the breakfast. "Now we are as well off as we are likely to be till dinner. And now let us have the news, Tom. Imprimis, how's Pecksniff?"

"I don't know how he is," was Tom's grave answer.

John Westlock put the teapot down, and looked at him, in astonishment.

"I don't know how he is," said Thomas Pinch; "and saving that I wish him no ill, I don't care. I have left him, John. I have left him for ever."

"Voluntarily?"

"Why no, for he dismissed me. But I had first found out that I was mistaken in him; and I could not have remained with him under any circumstances. I grieve to say that you were right in your estimate of his character. It may be a ridiculous weakness, John, but it has been very painful and bitter to me to find this out, I do assure you."

Tom had no need to direct that appealing look towards his friend, in mild and gentle deprecation of his answering with a laugh. John Westlock would as soon have thought of striking him down upon the floor.

"It was all a dream of mine," said Tom, "and it is over. I'll tell you how it happened, at some other time. Bear with my folly, John. I do not, just now, like to think or speak about it."

"I swear to you, Tom," returned his friend, with great earnestness of manner, after remaining silent for a few moments, "that when I see, as I do now, how deeply you feel this, I don't know whether to be glad or sorry, that you have made the discovery at last. I reproach myself with the thought that I ever jested on the subject; I ought to have known better."

"My dear friend," said Tom, extending his hand, "it is very generous and gallant in you to receive me and my disclosure in this spirit; it makes me blush to think that I should have felt a moment's uneasiness as I came along. You can't think what a weight is lifted off my mind," said Tom, taking up his knife and fork again, and looking very cheerful. "I shall punish the Boar's Head dreadfully."

The host, thus reminded of his duties, instantly betook himself to piling up all kinds of irreconcilable and contradictory viands in Tom's plate, and a very capital breakfast Tom made, and very much the better for it, Tom felt.

"That's all right," said John, after contemplating his visitor's proceedings, with infinite satisfaction. "Now, about our plans. You are going to stay with me of course. Where's your box?"

"It's at the Inn," said Tom. "I didn't intend—"

"Never mind what you didn't intend," John Westlock interposed. "What you *did* intend is more to the purpose. You intended, in coming here, to ask my advice, did you not, Tom?"

"Certainly."

"And to take it when I gave it to you?"

"Yes," rejoined Tom, smiling, "if it were good advice, which, being yours, I have no doubt it will be."

"Very well. Then don't be an obstinate old humbug in the outset, Tom, or I shall shut up shop and dispense none of that invaluable commodity. You are on a visit to me. I wish I had an organ for you, Tom!"

"So do the gentlemen down-stairs, and the gentlemen overhead, I have no doubt," was Tom's reply.

"Let me see. In the first place, you will wish to see your sister this morning," pursued his friend, "and of course you will like to go there alone. I'll walk part of the way with you; and see about a little business of my own, and meet you here again in the afternoon. Put that in your pocket, Tom. It's only the key of the door. If you come home first, you'll want it."

"Really," said Tom, "quartering one's self upon a friend in this way—"

"Why, there are two keys," interposed John Westlock. "I can't open the door with them both at once, can I? What a ridiculous fellow you are, Tom! Nothing particular you'd like for dinner, is there?"

"Oh dear no," said Tom.

"Very well, then you may as well leave it to me. Have a glass of cherry brandy, Tom?"

"Not a drop! What remarkable chambers these are!" said Pinch, "there's everything in 'em!"

"Bless your soul, Tom, nothing but a few little bachelor contrivances! the sort of impromptu arrangements that might have suggested themselves to Philip Quarll or Robinson Crusoe: that's all. What do you say? Shall we walk?"

"By all means," cried Tom. "As soon as you like."

Accordingly John Westlock took the French rolls out of his boots, and put his boots on, and dressed himself: giving Tom the paper to read in the meanwhile. When he returned, equipped for walking, he found Tom in a brown study, with the paper in his hand.

"Dreaming, Tom?"

"No," said Mr. Pinch, "No. I have been looking over the advertising sheet, thinking there might be something in it, which would be likely to suit me. But, as I often think, the strange thing seems to be that nobody is suited. Here are all kinds of employers wanting all sorts of servants, and all sorts of servants wanting all kinds of employers, and they never seem to come together. Here is a gentleman in a public office in a position of temporary difficulty, who wants to borrow five hundred pounds; and in the very next advertisement here is another gentleman who has got exactly that sum to lend.

But he'll never lend it to him, John, you'll find! Here's a lady possessing a moderate independence, who wants to board and lodge with a quiet, cheerful family; and here is a family describing themselves in those very words, 'a quiet cheerful family,' who want exactly such a lady to come and live with them. But she'll never go, John! Neither do any of these single gentlemen who want an airy bedroom, with the occasional use of a parlour, ever appear to come to terms with these other people who live in a rural situation remarkable for its bracing atmosphere, within five minutes' walk of the Royal Exchange. Even those letters of the alphabet, who are always running away from their friends and being entreated at the tops of columns to come back, never *do* come back, if we may judge from the number of times they are asked to do it, and don't. It really seems," said Tom, relinquishing the paper, with a thoughtful sigh, "as if people had the same gratification in printing their complaints as in making them known by word of mouth; as if they found it a comfort and consolation to proclaim 'I want such and such a thing, and I can't get it, and I don't expect I ever shall!'"

John Westlock laughed at the idea, and they went out together. So many years had passed since Tom was last in London, and he had known so little of it then, that his interest in all he saw was very great. He was particularly anxious, among other notorious localities, to have those streets pointed out to him which were appropriated to the slaughter of countrymen; and was quite disappointed to find, after a half-an-hour's walking, that he hadn't had his pocket picked. But on John Westlock inventing a pickpocket for his gratification, and pointing out a highly respectable stranger as one of that fraternity, he was much delighted.

His friend accompanied him to within a short distance of Camberwell, and having put him beyond the possibility of mistaking the wealthy brass-and-copper founder's, left him to make his visit. Arriving before the great bell-handle, Tom gave it a gentle pull. The porter appeared.

"Pray does Miss Pinch live here?" said Tom.

"Miss Pinch is governess here," replied the porter.

At the same time he looked at Tom from head to foot, as if he would have said, 'You are a nice man, *you* are; where did *you* come from!'

"It's the same young lady," said Tom. "It's quite right. Is she at home?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," rejoined the porter.

"Do you think you could have the goodness to ascertain?" said Tom. He had quite a delicacy in offering the suggestion, for the possibility of such a step did not appear to present itself to the porter's mind at all.

The fact was that the porter in answering the gate-bell had, according to usage, rung the house-bell (for it is as well to do these things in the Baronial style while you are about it), and that there the functions of his office had ceased. Being hired to open and shut the gate, and not to explain himself to strangers, he left this little incident to be developed by the footman with the tags, who, at this juncture, called out from the door steps:

"Hollo, there! wot are you up to! This way, young man!"

"Oh!" said Tom, hurrying towards him. "I didn't observe that there was anybody else. Pray, is Miss Pinch at home?"

"She's *in*," replied the footman. As much as to say to Tom: 'But if you think she has anything to do with the proprietorship of this place, you had better abandon that idea.'

"I wish to see her if you please," said Tom.

The footman, being a lively young man, happened to have his attention caught at that moment by the flight of a pigeon, in which he took so warm an interest, that his gaze was riveted on the bird until it was quite out of sight. He then invited Tom to come in, and showed him into a parlour.

"Hany neem?" said the young man, pausing languidly at the door.

It was a good thought: because without providing the stranger, in case he should happen to be of warm temper, with a sufficient excuse for knocking him down, it implied this young man's estimate of his quality, and relieved his breast of the oppressive burden of rating him in secret as a nameless and obscure individual.

"Say her brother, if you please," said Tom.

"Mother?" drawled the footman.

"Brother," repeated Tom, slightly raising his voice. "And if you will say, in the first instance, a gentleman, and then say her brother, I shall be obliged to you, as she does not expect me, or know I am in London, and I do not wish to startle her."

The young man's interest in Tom's observations had ceased long before this time, but he kindly waited until now; when, shutting the door, he withdrew.

"Dear me!" said Tom. "This is very disrespectful and uncivil behaviour. I hope these are new servants here, and that Ruth is very differently treated."

His cogitations were interrupted by the sound of voices in the adjoining room. They seemed to be engaged in high dispute, or in indignant reprimand of some offender; and gathering strength occasionally, broke out into a perfect whirlwind. It was in one of these gusts, as it appeared to Tom, that the footman announced him; for an abrupt and unnatural calm took place, and then a dead silence. He was standing before the window, wondering what domestic

quarrel might have caused these sounds, and hoping Ruth had nothing to do with it, when the door opened, and his sister ran into his arms.

"Why, bless my soul!" said Tom, looking at her with great pride, when they had tenderly embraced each other, "how altered you are, Ruth! I should scarcely have known you, my love, if I had seen you anywhere else, I declare! You are so improved," said Tom, with inexpressible



"NO RIGHT!" CRIED THE BRASS-AND-COPPER FOUNDER.

sible delight: "you are so womanly; you are so—positively, you know, you are so handsome!"

"If *you* think so, Tom—"

"Oh, but everybody must think so, you know," said Tom, gently smoothing down her hair. "It's matter of fact; not opinion. But what's the matter?" said Tom, looking at her more intently, "how flushed you are! and you have been crying."

"No, I have not, Tom."

"Nonsense," said her brother stoutly. "That's
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a story. Don't tell me! I know better. What is it, dear? I'm not with Mr. Pecksniff, now; I am going to try and settle myself in London; and if you are not happy here (as I very much fear you are not, for I begin to think you have been deceiving me with the kindest and most affectionate intention) you shall not remain here."

Oh! Tom's blood was rising; mind that! Perhaps the Boar's Head had something to do with it, but certainly the footman had. So had the sight of his pretty sister—a great deal to do with it. Tom could bear a good deal himself,

but he was proud of her, and pride is a sensitive thing. He began to think, "there are more Pecksniffs than one, perhaps," and by all the pins and needles that run up and down in angry veins, Tom was in a most unusual tingle all at once!

"We will talk about it, Tom," said Ruth, giving him another kiss to pacify him. "I am afraid I cannot stay here."

"Cannot!" replied Tom. "Why then, you shall not, my love. Heyday! You are not an object of charity! Upon my word!"

Tom was stopped in these exclamations by the footman, who brought a message from his master, importing that he wished to speak with him before he went, and with Miss Pinch also.

"Show the way," said Tom. "I'll wait upon him at once."

Accordingly they entered the adjoining room from which the noise of altercation had proceeded; and there they found a middle-aged gentleman, with a pompous voice and manner, and a middle-aged lady, with what may be termed an exciseable face, or one in which starch and vinegar were decidedly employed. There was likewise present that eldest pupil of Miss Pinch, whom Mrs. Todgers, on a previous occasion, had called a syrup, and who was now weeping and sobbing spitefully.

"My brother, sir," said Ruth Pinch, timidly presenting Tom.

"Oh!" cried the gentleman, surveying Tom attentively. "You really are Miss Pinch's brother, I presume? You will excuse my asking. I don't observe any resemblance."

"Miss Pinch has a brother, I know," observed the lady.

"Miss Pinch is always talking about her brother, when she ought to be engaged upon my education," sobbed the pupil.

"Sophia! Hold your tongue!" observed the gentleman. "Sit down, if you please," addressing Tom.

Tom sat down, looking from one face to another, in mute surprise.

"Remain here, if you please, Miss Pinch," pursued the gentleman, looking slightly over his shoulder.

Tom interrupted him here, by rising to place a chair for his sister. Having done which he sat down again.

"I am glad you chance to have called to see your sister to-day, sir," resumed the brass-and-copper founder. "For although I do not approve, as a principle, of any young person engaged in my family, in the capacity of a governess, receiving visitors, it happens in this case

to be well-timed. I am sorry to inform you that we are not at all satisfied with your sister."

"We are very much dissatisfied with her," observed the lady.

"I'd never say another lesson to Miss Pinch if I was to be beat to death for it!" sobbed the pupil.

"Sophia!" cried her father. "Hold your tongue!"

"Will you allow me to inquire what your ground of dissatisfaction is?" asked Tom.

"Yes," said the gentleman, "I will. I don't recognise it as a right; but I will. Your sister has not the slightest innate power of commanding respect. It has been a constant source of difference between us. Although she has been in this family for some time, and although the young lady who is now present, has almost, as it were, grown up under her tuition, that young lady has no respect for her. Miss Pinch has been perfectly unable to command my daughter's respect, or to win my daughter's confidence. Now," said the gentleman, allowing the palm of his hand to fall gravely down upon the table: "I maintain that there is something radically wrong in that! You, as her brother, may be disposed to deny it—"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Tom. "I am not at all disposed to deny it. I am sure that there is something radically wrong: radically monstrous: in that."

"Good Heavens!" cried the gentleman, looking round the room, with dignity, "what do I find to be the case! what results obtrude themselves upon me as flowing from this weakness of character on the part of Miss Pinch! What are my feelings as a father, when, after my desire (repeatedly expressed to Miss Pinch, as I think she will not venture to deny) that my daughter should be choice in her expressions, genteel in her deportment, as becomes her station in life, and politely distant to her inferiors in society, I find her, only this very morning, addressing Miss Pinch herself as a beggar!"

"A beggarly thing," observed the lady in correction.

"Which is worse," said the gentleman, triumphantly; "which is worse. A beggarly thing. A low, coarse, despicable expression!"

"Most despicable," cried Tom. "I am glad to find that there is a just appreciation of it here."

"So just, sir," said the gentleman, lowering his voice to be the more impressive. "So just, that, but for my knowing Miss Pinch to be an unprotected young person, an orphan, and without friends, I would, as I assured Miss Pinch,

upon my veracity, and personal character, a few minutes ago, I would have severed the connection between us at that moment and from that time."

"Bless my soul, sir!" cried Tom, rising from his seat; for he was now unable to contain himself any longer; "don't allow such considerations as those to influence you, pray. They don't exist, sir. She is not unprotected. She is ready to depart this instant. Ruth, my dear, get your bonnet on!"

"Oh, a pretty family!" cried the lady. "Oh, he's her brother! There's no doubt about that!"

"As little doubt, madam," said Tom, "as that the young lady yonder is the child of your teaching, and not my sister's. Ruth, my dear, get your bonnet on!"

"When you say, young man," interposed the brass-and-copper founder, haughtily, "with that impertinence which is natural to you, and which I therefore do not condescend to notice further, that the young lady, my eldest daughter, has been educated by any one but Miss Pinch, you—I needn't proceed. You comprehend me fully. I have no doubt you are used to it."

"Sir!" cried Tom, after regarding him in silence for some little time. "If you do not understand what I mean, I will tell you. If you do understand what I mean, I beg you not to repeat that mode of expressing yourself in answer to it. My meaning is, that no man can expect his children to respect what he degrades."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the gentleman. "Cant! cant! The common cant!"

"The common story, sir!" said Tom; "the story of a common mind. Your governess cannot win the confidence and respect of your children, forsooth! Let her begin by winning yours, and see what happens then."

"Miss Pinch is getting her bonnet on, I trust, my dear?" said the gentleman.

"I trust she is," said Tom, forestalling the reply. "I have no doubt she is. In the meantime I address myself to you, sir. You made your statement to me, sir; you required to see me for that purpose; and I have a right to answer it. I am not loud or turbulent," said Tom, which was quite true, "though I can scarcely say as much for you, in your manner of addressing yourself to me. And I wish, on my sister's behalf, to state the simple truth."

"You may state anything you like, young man," returned the gentleman, affecting to yawn. "My dear, Miss Pinch's money."

"When you tell me," resumed Tom, who was not the less indignant for keeping himself quiet, "that my sister has no innate power of com-

manding the respect of your children, I must tell you it is not so; and that she has. She is as well bred, as well taught, as well qualified by nature to command respect, as any hired of a governess you know. But when you place her at a disadvantage in reference to every servant in your house, how can you suppose, if you have the gift of common sense, that she is not in a tenfold worse position in reference to your daughters?"

"Pretty well! Upon my word," exclaimed the gentleman, "this is pretty well!"

"It is very ill, sir," said Tom. "It is very bad and mean, and wrong and cruel. Respect! I believe young people are quick enough to observe and imitate; and why or how should they respect whom no one else respects, and everybody slights? And very partial they must grow—oh, very partial!—to their studies, when they see to what a pass proficiency in those same tasks has brought their governess! Respect! Put anything the most deserving of respect before your daughters in the light in which you place her, and you will bring it down as low, no matter what it is!"

"You speak with extreme impertinence, young man," observed the gentleman.

"I speak without passion, but with extreme indignation and contempt for such a course of treatment, and for all who practise it," said Tom. "Why, how can you, as an honest gentleman, profess displeasure or surprise, at your daughter telling my sister she is something beggarly and humble, when you are for ever telling her the same thing yourself in fifty plain, out-speaking ways, though not in words; and when your very porter and footman make the same delicate announcement to all comers? As to your suspicion and distrust of her: even of her word: if she is not above their reach, you have no right to employ her."

"No right!" cried the brass-and-copper founder.

"Distinctly not," Tom answered. "If you imagine that the payment of an annual sum of money gives it to you, you immensely exaggerate its power and value. Your money is the least part of your bargain in such a case. You may be punctual in that to half a second on the clock, and yet be bankrupt. I have nothing more to say," said Tom, much flushed and flustered, now that it was over, "except to crave permission to stand in your garden until my sister is ready."

Not waiting to obtain it, Tom walked out.

Before he had well begun to cool, his sister joined him. She was crying; and Tom could

not bear that any one about the house should see her doing that.

"They will think you are sorry to go," said Tom. "You are not sorry to go?"

"No, Tom, no. I have been anxious to go for a very long time."

"Very well, then! Don't cry!" said Tom.

"I am so sorry for *you*, dear," sobbed Tom's sister.

"But you ought to be glad on my account," said Tom. "I shall be twice as happy with you for a companion. Hold up your head. There! Now we go out as we ought. Not blustering, you know, but firm and confident in ourselves."

The idea of Tom and his sister blustering, under any circumstances, was a splendid absurdity. But Tom was very far from feeling it to be so, in his excitement; and passed out at the gate with such severe determination written in his face that the porter hardly knew him again.

It was not until they had walked some short distance, and Tom found himself getting cooler and more collected, that he was quite restored to himself by an inquiry from his sister, who said in her pleasant little voice:

"Where are we going, Tom?"

"Dear me!" said Tom, stopping, "I don't know."

"Don't you—don't you live anywhere, dear?" asked Tom's sister, looking wistfully in his face.

"No," said Tom. "Not at present. Not exactly. I only arrived this morning. We must have some lodgings."

He didn't tell her that he had been going to stay with his friend John, and could on no account think of billeting two inmates upon him, of whom one was a young lady; for he knew that would make her uncomfortable, and would cause her to regard herself as being an inconvenience to him. Neither did he like to leave her anywhere while he called on John and told him of this change in his arrangements; for he was delicate of seeming to encroach upon the generous and hospitable nature of his friend. Therefore he said again, "We must have some lodgings, of course;" and said it as stoutly as if he had been a perfect Directory and Guide-Book to all the lodgings in London.

"Where shall we go and look for 'em?" said Tom. "What do you think?"

Tom's sister was not much wiser on such a topic than he was. So she squeezed her little purse into his coat-pocket, and folding the little hand with which she did so on the other little hand with which she clasped his arm, said nothing.

"It ought to be a cheap neighbourhood," said Tom, "and not too far from London. Let me see. Should you think Islington a good place?"

"I should think it was an excellent place, Tom."

"It used to be called Merry Islington, once upon a time," said Tom. "Perhaps it's merry now; if so, it's all the better. Eh?"

"If it's not too dear," said Tom's sister.

"Of course, if it's not too dear," assented Tom. "Well, where *is* Islington? We can't do better than go there, I should think. Let's go."

Tom's sister would have gone anywhere with him; so they walked off, arm in arm, as comfortably as possible. Finding, presently, that Islington was not in that neighbourhood, Tom made inquiries respecting a public conveyance thither: which they soon obtained. As they rode along they were very full of conversation indeed, Tom relating what had happened to him, and Tom's sister relating what had happened to her, and both finding a great deal more to say than time to say it in: for they had only just begun to talk, in comparison with what they had to tell each other, when they reached their journey's end.

"Now," said Tom, "we must first look out for some very unpretending streets, and then look out for bills in the windows."

So they walked off again, quite as happily as if they had just stepped out of a snug little house of their own, to look for lodgings on account of somebody else. Tom's simplicity was unabated, Heaven knows; but now that he had somebody to rely upon him, he was stimulated to rely a little more upon himself, and was, in his own opinion, quite a desperate fellow.

After roaming up and down for hours, looking at some scores of lodgings, they began to find it rather fatiguing, especially as they saw none which were at all adapted to their purpose. At length, however, in a singular little old-fashioned house, up a blind street, they discovered two small bed-rooms and a triangular parlour, which promised to suit them well enough. Their desiring to take possession immediately was a suspicious circumstance, but even this was surmounted by the payment of their first week's rent, and a reference to John Westlock, Esquire, Furnival's Inn, High Holborn.

Ah! It was a goodly sight, when this important point was settled, to behold Tom and his sister trotting round to the baker's, and the butcher's, and the grocer's, with a kind of dreadful delight in the unaccustomed cares of house-keeping; taking secret counsel together as they

gave their small orders, and distracted by the least suggestion on the part of the shopkeeper! When they got back to the triangular parlour, and Tom's sister bustling to and fro, busy about a thousand pleasant nothings, stopped every now and then to give old Tom a kiss, or smile up on him, Tom rubbed his hands, as if all Islington were his.

It was late in the afternoon now, though, and high time for Tom to keep his appointment. So, after agreeing with his sister that in consideration of not having dined, they would venture on the extravagance of chops for supper, at nine, he walked out again to narrate these marvellous occurrences to John.

"I am quite a family man all at once," thought Tom. "If I can only get something to do, how comfortable Ruth and I may be! Ah, that if! But it's of no use to despond. I can but do that, when I have tried everything and failed; and even then it won't serve me much. Upon my word," thought Tom, quickening his pace, "I don't know what John will think has become of me. He'll begin to be afraid I have strayed into one of those streets where the countrymen are murdered; and that I have been made meat pies of, or some such horrible thing."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TOM PINCH, GOING ASTRAY, FINDS THAT HE IS NOT THE ONLY PERSON IN THAT PREDICAMENT. HE RETALIATES UPON A FALLEN FOE.

TOM'S evil genius did not lead him into the dens of any of those preparers of cannibalic pastry, who are represented in many standard country legends, as doing a lively retail business in the Metropolis; nor did it mark him out as the prey of ring-droppers, pea and thimble-riggers, duffers, touters, or any of those bloodless sharpers, who are, perhaps, a little better known to the police. He fell into conversation with no gentleman, who took him into a public house, where there happened to be another gentleman, who swore he had more money than any gentleman, and very soon proved he had more money than one gentleman, by taking his away from him: neither did he fall into any other of the numerous man-traps which are set up, without notice, in the public grounds of this city. But he lost his way. He very soon did that; and

in trying to find it again, he lost it more and more.

Now, Tom, in his guileless distrust of London, thought himself very knowing in coming to the determination that he would not ask to be directed to Furnival's Inn, if he could help it; unless, indeed, he should happen to find himself near the Mint, or the Bank of England; in which case, he would step in, and ask a civil question or two, confiding in the perfect respectability of the concern. So, on he went, looking up all the streets he came near, and going up half of them; and thus, by dint of not being true to Goswell Street, and filing off into Aldermanbury, and bewildering himself in Barbican, and being constant to the wrong point of the compass in London Wall, and then getting himself crosswise into Thames Street, by an instinct that would have been marvellous if he had had the least desire or reason to go there, he found himself, at last, hard by the Monument.

The Man in the Monument was quite as mysterious a being to Tom as the Man in the Moon. It immediately occurred to him that the lonely creature who held himself aloof from all mankind in that pillar like some old hermit, was the very man of whom to ask his way. Cold he might be; little sympathy he had, perhaps, with human passion—the column seemed too tall for that; but if truth didn't live in the base of the Monument, notwithstanding Pope's couplet about the outside of it, where in London (Tom thought) was she likely to be found!

Coming close below the pillar, it was a great encouragement to Tom to find that the Man in the Monument had simple tastes; that stony and artificial as his residence was, he still preserved some rustic recollections; that he liked plants, hung up bird-cages, was not wholly cut off from fresh groundsel, and kept young trees in tubs. The Man in the Monument himself was sitting outside the door—his own door: the Monument door; what a grand idea!—and was actually yawning, as if there were no Monument to stop his mouth, and give him a perpetual interest in his own existence.

Tom was advancing towards this remarkable creature, to inquire the way to Furnival's Inn, when two people came to see the Monument. They were a gentleman and a lady; and the gentleman said, "How much a-piece?"

The Man in the Monument replied, "A Tanner."

It seemed a low expression, compared with the Monument.

The gentleman put a shilling into his hand, and the Man in the Monument opened a dark

little door. When the gentleman and lady had passed out of view, he shut it again, and came slowly back to his chair.

He sat down and laughed.

"They don't know what a many steps there is," he said. "It's worth twice the money to stop here. Oh, my eye!"

The Man in the Monument was a Cynic; a worldly man! Tom couldn't ask his way of *him*. He was prepared to put no confidence in anything he said.

"My Gracious!" cried a well-known voice behind Mr. Pinch. "Why, to be sure it is!"

At the same time he was poked in the back by a parasol. Turning round to inquire into this salute, he beheld the eldest daughter of his late patron.

"Miss Pecksniff!" said Tom.

"Why, my goodness, Mr. Pinch!" cried Cherry. "What are you doing here?"

"I have rather wandered from my way," said Tom. "I——"

"I hope you have run away," said Charity. "It would be quite spirited and proper if you had, when my Papa so far forgets himself."

"I have left him," returned Tom. "But it was perfectly understood on both sides. It was not done clandestinely."

"Is he married?" asked Cherry with a spasmodic shake of her chin.

"No, not yet," said Tom, colouring: "to tell you the truth, I don't think he is likely to be, if—if Miss Graham is the object of his passion."

"Tcha, Mr. Pinch!" cried Charity, with sharp impatience, "you're very easily deceived. You don't know the arts of which such a creature is capable. Oh! it's a wicked world."

"You are not married?" Tom hinted, to divert the conversation.

"N—no!" said Cherry, tracing out one particular paving stone in Monument Yard with the end of her parasol. "I—but really it's quite impossible to explain. Won't you walk in?"

"You live here, then?" said Tom.

"Yes," returned Miss Pecksniff, pointing with her parasol to Todgers's: "I reside with this lady, *at present*."

The great stress on the two last words suggested to Tom that he was expected to say something in reference to them. So he said:

"Only at present! Are you going home again, soon?"

"No, Mr. Pinch," returned Charity. "No thank you. No! A mother-in-law who is younger than—I mean to say, who is as nearly as possible about the same age as one's self,

would not quite suit my spirit. Not quite!" said Cherry, with a spiteful shiver.

"I thought from your saying at present"—Tom observed.

"Really upon my word! I had no idea you would press me so very closely on the subject, Mr. Pinch," said Charity, blushing, "or I should not have been so foolish as to allude to—Oh really!—won't you walk in?"

Tom mentioned, to excuse himself, that he had an appointment in Furnival's Inn, and that coming from Islington he had taken a few wrong turnings, and arrived at the Monument instead. Miss Pecksniff simpered very much when he asked her if she knew the way to Furnival's Inn, and at length found courage to reply:

"A gentleman who is a friend of mine, or at least who is not exactly a friend so much as a sort of acquaintance—Oh, upon my word, I hardly know what I say, Mr. Pinch; you mustn't suppose there is any engagement between us; or at least if there is, that it is at all a settled thing as yet—is going to Furnival's Inn immediately, I believe upon a little business, and I am sure he would be very glad to accompany you, so as to prevent your going wrong again. You had better walk in. You will very likely find my sister Merry here," she said, with a curious toss of her head, and anything but an agreeable smile.

"Then, I think, I'll endeavour to find my way alone," said Tom; "for I fear she would not be very glad to see me. That unfortunate occurrence, in relation to which you and I had some amicable words together, in private, is not likely to have impressed her with any friendly feeling towards me. Though it really was not my fault."

"She has never heard of that, you may depend," said Cherry, gathering up the corners of her mouth, and nodding at Tom. "I am far from sure that she would bear you any mighty ill will for it, if she had."

"You don't say so?" cried Tom, who was really concerned by this insinuation.

"I say nothing," said Charity. "If I had not already known what shocking things treachery and deceit are in themselves, Mr. Pinch, I might perhaps have learnt it from the success they meet with—from the success they meet with." Here she smiled as before. "But I don't say anything. On the contrary, I should scorn it. You had better walk in!"

There was something hidden here which piqued Tom's interest and troubled his tender heart. When, in a moment's irresolution, he looked at

Charity. he could not but observe a struggle in her face between a sense of triumph and a sense of shame; nor could he but remark how, meeting even his eyes, which she cared so little for, she turned away her own, for all the sullen defiance in her manner.

An uneasy thought entered Tom's head; a shadowy misgiving that the altered relations between himself and Pecksniff, were somehow to involve an altered knowledge on his part of other people, and were to give him an insight into much of which he had had no previous suspicion. And yet he put no definite construction upon Charity's proceedings. He certainly had no idea that as he had been the audience and spectator of her mortification, she grasped with eager delight at any opportunity of reproaching her sister with his presence in *her* far deeper misery; for he knew nothing of it, and only pictured that sister as the same giddy, careless, trivial creature she always had been, with the same slight estimation of himself which she had never been at the least pains to conceal. In short, he had merely a confused impression that Miss Pecksniff was not quite sisterly or kind; and being curious to set it right, accompanied her as she desired.

The house-door being opened, she went in before Tom, requesting him to follow her; and led the way to the parlour door.

"Oh, Merry!" she said, looking in, "I am so glad you have not gone home. Who do you think I have met in the street, and brought to see you! Mr. Pinch! There. Now you *are* surprised, I am sure!"

Not more surprised than Tom was, when he looked upon her. Not so much. Not half so much.

"Mr. Pinch has left Papa, my dear," said Cherry, "and his prospects are quite flourishing. I have promised that Augustus, who is going that way, shall escort him to the place he wants. Augustus, my child, where are you?"

With these words Miss Pecksniff screamed her way out of the parlour, calling on Augustus Moddle to appear; and left Tom Pinch alone with her sister.

If she had always been his kindest friend; if she had treated him through all his servitude with such consideration as was never yet received by struggling man; if she had lightened every moment of those many years, and had ever spared and never wounded him; his honest heart could not have swelled before her with a deeper pity, or a purer freedom from all base remembrance than it did then.

"My gracious me! You are really the last

person in the world I should have thought of seeing, I am sure!"

Tom was sorry to hear her speaking in her old manner. He had not expected that. Yet he did not feel it a contradiction that he should be sorry to see her so unlike her old self, and sorry at the same time to hear her speaking in her old manner. The two things seemed quite natural.

"I wonder you find any gratification in coming to see me. I can't think what put it in your head. I never had much in seeing you. There was no love lost between us, Mr. Pinch, at any time, I think."

Her bonnet lay beside her on the sofa, and she was very busy with the ribbons as she spoke. Much too busy to be conscious of the work her fingers did.

"We never quarrelled," said Tom. Tom was right in that, for one person can no more quarrel without an adversary, than one person can play at chess, or fight a duel. "I hoped you would be glad to shake hands with an old friend. Don't let us rake up by-gones," said Tom. "If I ever offended you, forgive me."

She looked at him for a moment; dropped her bonnet from her hands; spread them before her altered face; and burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Pinch!" she said, "although I never used you well, I did believe your nature was forgiving. I did not think you could be cruel."

She spoke as little like her old self now, for certain, as Tom could possibly have wished. But she seemed to be appealing to him reproachfully, and he did not understand her.

"I seldom showed it—never—I know that. But I had that belief in you, that if I had been asked to name the person in the world least likely to retort upon me, I would have named you, confidently."

"Would have named me!" Tom repeated.

"Yes," she said with energy, "and I have often thought so."

After a moment's reflection, Tom sat himself upon a chair beside her.

"Do you believe," said Tom, "oh can you think, that what I said just now, I said with any but the true and plain intention which my words professed? I mean it in the spirit and the letter. If I ever offended you, forgive me; I may have done so, many times. You never injured or offended me. How, then, could I possibly retort, if even I were stern and bad enough to wish to do it!"

After a little while she thanked him through her tears and sobs, and told him she had never been at once so sorry and so comforted, since

she left home. Still she wept bitterly; and it was the greater pain to Tom to see her weeping, from her standing in especial need, just then, of sympathy and tenderness.

"Come, come!" said Tom, "you used to be as cheerful as the day was long."

"Ah! used!" she cried, in such a tone as rent Tom's heart.

"And will be again," said Tom.

"No, never more. No, never, never more. If you should talk with old Mr. Chuzzlewit, at any time," she added, looking hurriedly into his face—"I sometimes thought he liked you, but suppressed it—will you promise me to tell him that you saw me here, and that I said I bore in mind the time we talked together in the churchyard?"

Tom promised that he would.

"Many times since then, when I have wished I had been carried there before that day, I have recalled his words. I wish that he should know how true they were, although the least acknowledgment to that effect has never passed my lips, and never will."

Tom promised this, conditionally, too. He did not tell her how improbable it was that he and the old man would ever meet again, because he thought it might disturb her more.

"If he should ever know this, through your means, dear Mr. Pinch," said Mercy, "tell him that I sent the message, not for myself, but that he might be more forbearing and more patient, and more trustful to some other person, in some other time of need. Tell him that if he could know how my heart trembled in the balance that day, and what a very little would have turned the scale, his own would bleed with pity for me."

"Yes, yes," said Tom, "I will."

"When I appeared to him the most unworthy of his help, I was—I know I was, for I have often, often, thought about it since—the most inclined to yield to what he showed me. Oh! if he had relented but a little more; if he had thrown himself in my way for but one other quarter of an hour; if he had extended his compassion for a vain, unthinking, miserable girl, in but the least degree; he might, and I believe he would, have saved her! Tell him that I don't blame him, but am grateful for the effort that he made; but ask him, for the love of God, and youth, and in merciful consideration for the struggle which an ill-advised and unawakened nature makes to hide the strength it thinks its weakness—ask him never, never, to forget this, when he deals with one again!"

Although Tom did not hold the clue to her

full meaning, he could guess it pretty nearly. Touched to the quick, he took her hand and said, or meant to say, some words of consolation. She felt and understood them, whether they were spoken or no. He was not quite certain, afterwards, but that she had tried to kneel down at his feet, and bless him.

He found that he was not alone in the room when she had left it. Mrs. Todgers was there, shaking her head. Tom had never seen Mrs. Todgers, it is needless to say, but he had a perception of her being the lady of the house; and he saw some genuine compassion in her eyes, that won his good opinion.

"Ah, sir! You are an old friend, I see," said Mrs. Todgers.

"Yes," said Tom.

"And yet," quoth Mrs. Todgers, shutting the door softly, "she hasn't told you what her troubles are, I'm certain."

Tom was struck by these words, for they were quite true. "Indeed," he said, "She has not."

"And never would," said Mrs. Todgers, "if you saw her daily. She never makes the least complaint to me, or utters a single word of explanation or reproach. But I know," said Mrs. Todgers, drawing in her breath, "I know!"

Tom nodded sorrowfully, "So do I."

"I fully believe," said Mrs. Todgers, taking her pocket-handkerchief from the flat reticule, "that nobody can tell one half of what that poor young creature has to undergo. But though she comes here, constantly, to ease her poor full heart without his knowing it; and saying, 'Mrs. Todgers, I am very low to-day; I think that I shall soon be dead,' sits crying in my room until the fit is past; I know no more from her. And, I believe," said Mrs. Todgers, putting back her handkerchief again, "that she considers me a good friend too."

Mrs. Todgers might have said her best friend. Commercial gentlemen and gravy had tried Mrs. Todgers's temper; the main chance—it was such a very small one in her case, that she might have been excused for looking sharp after it, lest it should entirely vanish from her sight—had taken a firm hold on Mrs. Todgers's attention. But in some odd nook in Mrs. Todgers's breast, up a great many steps, and in a corner easy to be overlooked, there was a secret door, with "Woman" written on the spring, which, at a touch from Mercy's hand, had flown wide open, and admitted her for shelter.

When boarding-house accounts are balanced with all other ledgers, and the books of the Recording Angel are made up for ever, perhaps there may be seen an entry to thy credit, lean

Mrs. Todgers, which shall make thee beautiful!

She was growing beautiful so rapidly in Tom's eyes; for he saw that she was poor, and that this good had sprung up in her from among the sordid strivings of her life: that she might have been a very Venus in a minute more, if Miss Pecksniff had not entered with her friend.

"Mr. Thomas Pinch!" said Charity, performing the ceremony of introduction with evident pride, "Mr. Moddle. Where's my sister?"

"Gone, Miss Pecksniff," Mrs. Todgers answered. "She had appointed to be home."

"Ah!" said Charity, looking at Tom. "Oh, dear me!"

"She's greatly altered since she's been Anoth—since she's been married, Mrs. Todgers!" observed Moddle.

"My dear Augustus!" said Miss Pecksniff, in a low voice, "I verily believe you have said that fifty thousand times in my hearing. What a Prose you are!"

This was succeeded by some trifling love



MR. NADGETT PRODUCES THE RESULT OF HIS PRIVATE INQUIRIES.

passages, which appeared to originate with, if not to be wholly carried on by, Miss Pecksniff. At any rate, Mr. Moddle was much slower in his responses than is customary with young lovers, and exhibited a lowness of spirits which was quite oppressive.

He did not improve at all when Tom and he were in the streets, but sighed so dismally that it was dreadful to hear him. As a means of cheering him up, Tom told him that he wished him joy.

"Joy!" cried Moddle. "Ha, ha!"

"What an extraordinary young man!" thought Tom.

"The Scornor has not set his seal upon you. *You* care what becomes of you?" said Moddle. Tom admitted that it was a subject in which he certainly felt some interest.

"I don't," said Mr. Moddle. "The Elements may have me when they please. I'm ready."

Tom inferred from these and other expressions of the same nature, that he was jealous. Therefore he allowed him to take his own course; which was such a gloomy one, that he felt a load removed from his mind when they parted company at the gate of Furnival's Inn.

It was now a couple of hours past John Westlock's dinner-time; and he was walking up

and down the room, quite anxious for Tom's safety. The table was spread; the wine was carefully decanted; and the dinner smelt delicious.

"Why Tom, old boy, where on earth have you been? Your box is here. Get your boots off instantly, and sit down!"

"I am sorry to say I can't stay, John," replied Tom Pinch, who was breathless with the haste he had made in running up the stairs.

"Can't stay!"

"If you'll go on with your dinner," said Tom, "I'll tell you my reason the while. I mustn't eat myself, or I shall have no appetite for the chops."

"There are no chops here, my good fellow."

"No. But there are, at Islington," said Tom.

John Westlock was perfectly confounded by this reply, and vowed he would not touch a morsel until Tom had explained himself fully. So Tom sat down and told him all; to which he listened with the greatest interest.

He knew Tom too well, and respected his delicacy too much, to ask him why he had taken these measures without communicating with him first. He quite concurred in the expediency of Tom's immediately returning to his sister, as he knew so little of the place in which he had left her; and good-humouredly proposed to ride back with him in a cab, in which he might convey his box. Tom's proposition that he should sup with them that night, he flatly rejected, but made an appointment with him for the morrow. "And now, Tom," he said, as they rode along, "I have a question to ask you, to which I expect a manly and straightforward answer. Do you want any money? I am pretty sure you do."

"I don't indeed," said Tom.

"I believe you are deceiving me."

"No. With many thanks to you, I am quite in earnest," Tom replied. "My sister has some money, and so have I. If I had nothing else, John, I have a five-pound note which that good creature, Mrs. Lupin, of the Dragon, handed up to me outside the coach, in a letter begging me to borrow it; and then drove off as hard as she could go."

"And a blessing on every dimple in her handsome face, say I!" cried John, "though why you should give her the preference over me, I don't know. Never mind. I bide my time, Tom."

"And I hope you'll continue to bide it," returned Tom gaily. "For I owe you more, already, in a hundred other ways, than I can ever hope to pay."

They parted at the door of Tom's new residence. John Westlock, sitting in the cab, and, catching a glimpse of a blooming little busy creature darting out to kiss Tom and to help him with his box, would not have had the least objection to change places with him.

Well! she *was* a cheerful little thing; and had a quaint, bright quietness about her, that was infinitely pleasant. Surely she was the best sauce for chops ever invented. The potatoes seemed to take a pleasure in sending up their grateful steam before her; the froth upon the pint of porter pouted to attract her notice. But it was all in vain. She saw nothing but Tom. Tom was the first and last thing in the world.

As she sat opposite to Tom at supper, fingering one of Tom's pet tunes upon the table cloth, and smiling in his face, he had never been so happy in his life.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SECRET SERVICE.

HEN walking from the City with his sentimental friend, Tom Pinch had looked into the face, and brushed against the threadbare sleeve of Mr. Nadgett, man of mystery to the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company. Mr. Nadgett naturally passed away from Tom's remembrance, as he passed out of his view; for he didn't know him, and had never heard his name.

As there are a vast number of people in the huge metropolis of England who rise up every morning, not knowing where their heads will rest at night, so there are a multitude who shooting arrows over houses as their daily business, never know on whom they fall. Mr. Nadgett might have passed Tom Pinch ten thousand times; might even have been quite familiar with his face, his name, pursuits, and character; yet never once have dreamed that Tom had any interest in any act or mystery of his. Tom might have done the like by him, of course. But the same private man out of all the men alive, was in the mind of each at the same moment; was prominently connected, though in a different manner, with the day's adventures of both; and formed, when they passed each other in the street, the one absorbing topic of their thoughts.

Why Tom had Jonas Chuzzlewit in his mind requires no explanation. Why Mr. Nadgett

should have had Jonas Chuzzlewit in his, is quite another thing.

But somehow or other that amiable and worthy orphan had become a part of the mystery of Mr. Nadgett's existence. Mr. Nadgett took an interest in his lightest proceedings; and it never flagged or wavered. He watched him in and out of the Insurance Office, where he was now formally installed as a Director; he dogged his footsteps in the streets; he stood listening when he talked; he sat in coffee-rooms entering his name in the great pocket-book, over and over again; he wrote letters to himself about him constantly; and, when he found them in his pocket, put them in the fire, with such distrust and caution that he would bend down to watch the crumbled tinder while it floated upward, as if his mind misgave him, that the mystery it had contained might come out at the chimney-pot.

And yet all this was quite a secret. Mr. Nadgett kept it to himself, and kept it close. Jonas had no more idea that Mr. Nadgett's eyes were fixed on him, than he had that he was living under the daily inspection and report of a whole order of Jesuits. Indeed Mr. Nadgett's eyes were seldom fixed on any other objects than the ground, the clock, or the fire; but every button on his coat might have been an eye: he saw so much.

The secret manner of the man disarmed suspicion in this wise; suggesting, not that he was watching any one, but that he thought some other man was watching him. He went about so stealthily, and kept himself so wrapped up in himself, that the whole object of his life appeared to be, to avoid notice, and preserve his own mystery. Jonas sometimes saw him in the street, hovering in the outer office, waiting at the door for the man who never came, or slinking off with his immovable face and drooping head, and the one beaver glove dangling before him; but he would as soon have thought of the cross upon the top of St. Paul's Cathedral taking note of what he did, or slowly winding a great net about his feet, as of Nadgett's being engaged in such an occupation.

Mr. Nadgett made a mysterious change about this time in his mysterious life: for whereas he had, until now, been first seen every morning coming down Cornhill, so exactly like the Nadgett of the day before, as to occasion a popular belief that he never went to bed or took his clothes off, he was now first seen in Holborn, coming out of Kingsgate-street; and it was soon discovered that he actually went every morning to a barber's shop in that street to get

shaved; and that the barber's name was Sweedlepipe. He seemed to make appointments with the man who never came, to meet him at this barber's; for he would frequently take long spells of waiting in the shop, and would ask for pen and ink, and pull out his pocket-book, and be very busy over it for an hour at a time. Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Sweedlepipe had many deep discourses on the subject of this mysterious customer; but they usually agreed that he had speculated too much and was keeping out of the way.

He must have appointed the man who never kept his word, to meet him at another new place too; for one day he was found, for the first time, by the waiter at the Mourning Coach-Horse, the House-of-call for Undertakers, down in the City there, making figures with a pipe-stem in the sawdust of a clean spittoon; and declining to call for anything, on the ground of expecting a gentleman presently. As the gentleman was not honourable enough to keep his engagement, he came again next day, with his pocket-book in such a state of distention that he was regarded in the bar as a man of large property. After that, he repeated his visits every day, and had so much writing to do, that he made nothing of emptying a capacious leaden inkstand in two sittings. Although he never talked much, still by being there among the regular customers, he made their acquaintance; and in course of time became quite intimate with Mr. Tacker, Mr. Mould's foreman; and even with Mr. Mould himself, who openly said he was a long-headed man, a dry one, a salt fish, a deep file, a rasper: and made him the subject of many other flattering encomiums.

At the same time, too, he told the people in the Insurance Office, in his own mysterious way, that there was something wrong (secretly wrong, of course,) in his liver, and that he feared he must put himself under the doctor's hands. He was delivered over to Jobling upon this representation; and though Jobling could not find out where his liver was wrong, wrong Mr. Nadgett said it was; observing that it was his own liver, and he hoped he ought to know. Accordingly, he became Mr. Jobling's patient; and detailing his symptoms in his slow and secret way, was in and out of that gentleman's room a dozen times a-day.

As he pursued all these occupations at once; and all steadily; and all secretly; and never slackened in his watchfulness of everything that Mr. Jonas said and did, and left unsaid and undone; it is not improbable that they were,

secretly, essential parts of some great secret scheme which Mr. Nadgett had on foot

It was on the morning of this very day on which so much had happened to Tom Pinch, that Nadgett suddenly appeared before Mr. Montague's house in Pall Mall—he always made his appearance as if he had at that moment come up a trap—when the clocks were striking nine. He rang the bell in a covert, under-handed way, as though it were a treasonable act; and passed in at the door, the moment it was opened wide enough to receive his body. That done, he shut it immediately with his own hands.

Mr. Bailey, taking up his name without delay, returned with a request that he would follow him into his master's chamber. The chairman of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Board was dressing, and received him as a business person who was often backwards and forwards, and was received at all times for his business' sake.

"Well, Mr. Nadgett?"

Mr. Nadgett put his hat upon the ground and coughed. The boy having withdrawn and shut the door, he went to it softly, examined the handle, and returned to within a pace or two of the chair in which Mr. Montague sat.

"Any news, Mr. Nadgett?"

"I think we have some news at last, sir."

"I am happy to hear it. I began to fear you were off the scent, Mr. Nadgett."

"No, sir. It grows cold occasionally. It will sometimes. We can't help that."

"You are truth itself, Mr. Nadgett. Do you report a great success?"

"That depends upon your judgment and construction of it" was his answer, as he put on his spectacles.

"What do you think of it yourself? Have you pleased yourself?"

Mr. Nadgett rubbed his hands slowly, stroked his chin, looked round the room, and said, "Yes, yes, I think it's a good case. I am disposed to think it's a good case. Will you go into it at once?"

"By all means."

Mr. Nadgett picked out a certain chair from among the rest, and having planted it in a particular spot, as carefully as if he had been going to vault over it, placed another chair in front of it: leaving room for his own legs between them. He then sat down in chair number two, and laid his pocket-book, very carefully, on chair number one. He then untied the pocket-book, and hung the string over the back of chair number one. He then drew both the chairs a little nearer Mr. Montague, and opening the

pocket-book spread out its contents. Finally, he selected a certain memorandum from the rest, and held it out to his employer, who, during the whole of these preliminary ceremonies, had been making violent efforts to conceal his impatience.

"I wish you wouldn't be so fond of making notes, my excellent friend," said Tigg Montague with a ghastly smile. "I wish you would consent to give me their purport by word of mouth."

"I don't like word of mouth," said Mr. Nadgett, gravely. "We never know who's listening."

Mr. Montague was going to retort, when Nadgett handed him the paper, and said, with quiet exultation in his tone, "We'll begin at the beginning, and take that one first, if you please, sir."

The chairman cast his eyes upon it, coldly, and with a smile which did not render any great homage to the slow and methodical habits of his spy. But he had not read half-a-dozen lines when the expression of his face began to change, and before he had finished the perusal of the paper, it was full of grave and serious attention.

"Number Two," said Mr. Nadgett, handing him another, and receiving back the first. "Read Number Two, sir, if you please. There is more interest as you go on."

Tigg Montague leaned backward in his chair, and cast upon his emissary such a look of vacant wonder (not unmingled with alarm), that Mr. Nadgett considered it necessary to repeat the request he had already twice preferred: with the view of recalling his attention to the point in hand. Profiting by the hint, Mr. Montague went on with Number Two, and afterwards with Numbers Three, and Four, and Five, and so on.

These documents were all in Mr. Nadgett's writing, and were apparently a series of memoranda, jotted down from time to time upon the backs of old letters, or any scrap of paper that came first to hand. Loose straggling scrawls they were, and of very uninviting exterior; but they had weighty purpose in them, if the chairman's face were any index to the character of their contents.

The progress of Mr. Nadgett's secret satisfaction arising out of the effect they made, kept pace with the emotions of the reader. At first, Mr. Nadgett sat with his spectacles low down upon his nose, looking over them at his employer, and nervously rubbing his hands. After a little while, he changed his posture in his chair for one of greater ease, and leisurely

perused the next document he held ready, as if an occasional glance at his employer's face were now enough, and all occasion for anxiety or doubt were gone. And finally he rose and looked out of the window, where he stood with a triumphant air, until Tigg Montague had finished.

"And this is the last, Mr. Nadgett!" said that gentleman, drawing a long breath.

"That, sir, is the last."

"You are a wonderful man, Mr. Nadgett!"

"I think it is a pretty good case," he returned, as he gathered up his papers. "It cost some trouble, sir."

"The trouble shall be well rewarded, Mr. Nadgett." Nadgett bowed. "There is a deeper impression of Somebody's Hoof here, than I expected, Mr. Nadgett. I may congratulate myself upon your being such a good hand at a secret."

"Oh! nothing has an interest to me that's not a secret," replied Nadgett, as he tied the string about his pocket-book, and put it up. "It almost takes away any pleasure I may have had in this inquiry even to make it known to you."

"A most invaluable constitution," Tigg retorted. "A great gift for a gentleman employed as you are, Mr. Nadgett. Much better than discretion: though you possess that quality also in an eminent degree. I think I heard a double knock. Will you put your head out of window, and tell me whether there is anybody at the door?"

Mr. Nadgett softly raised the sash, and peered out from the very corner, as a man might who was looking down into a street from whence a brisk discharge of musketry might be expected at any moment. Drawing in his head with equal caution, he observed, not altering his voice or manner:

"Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit!"

"I thought so," Tigg retorted.

"Shall I go?"

"I think you had better. Stay though! No! remain here, Mr. Nadgett, if you please."

It was remarkable how pale and flurried he had become in an instant. There was nothing to account for it. His eye had fallen on his razors: but what of them!

Mr. Chuzzlewit was announced.

"Show him up directly. Nadgett! Don't you leave us alone together. Mind you don't, now! By the Lord!" he added in a whisper to himself: "We don't know what may happen!"

Saying this, he hurriedly took up a couple of hair-brushes, and began to exercise them on his

own head, as if his toilet had not been interrupted. Mr. Nadgett withdrew to the stove, in which there was a small fire for the convenience of heating curling-irons; and taking advantage of so favourable an opportunity for drying his pocket-handkerchief, produced it without loss of time. There he stood, during the whole interview, holding it before the bars, and sometimes, but not often, glancing over his shoulder.

"My dear Chuzzlewit!" cried Montague, as Jonas entered: "you rise with the lark. Though you go to bed with the nightingale, you rise with the lark. You have superhuman energy, my dear Chuzzlewit!"

"Ecod!" said Jonas, with an air of languor and ill-humour, as he took a chair, "I should be very glad not to get up with the lark, if I could help it. But I am a light sleeper; and it's better to be up, than lying awake, counting the dismal old church-clocks, in bed."

"A light sleeper!" cried his friend. "Now, what is a light sleeper? I often hear the expression, but upon my life I have not the least conception what a light sleeper is."

"Hallo!" said Jonas, "Who's that! Oh, old what's-his-name; looking (as usual) as if he wanted to skulk up the chimney."

"Ha, ha! I have no doubt he does."

"Well! He's not wanted here, I suppose," said Jonas. "He may go, mayn't he?"

"Oh, let him stay, let him stay!" said Tigg. "He's a mere piece of furniture. He has been making his report, and is waiting for further orders. He has been told," said Tigg, raising his voice, "not to lose sight of certain friends of ours, or to think that he has done with them by any means. He understands his business."

"He need," replied Jonas; "for of all the precious old dummies in appearance that ever I saw, he's about the worst. He's afraid of me, I think."

"It's my belief," said Tigg, "that you are Poison to him. Nadgett! give me that towel!"

He had as little occasion for a towel as Jonas had for a start. But Nadgett brought it quickly; and, having lingered for a moment, fell back upon his old post by the fire.

"You see, my dear fellow," resumed Tigg, "you are too—what's the matter with your lips? How white they are!"

"I took some vinegar just now," said Jonas. "I had oysters for my breakfast. Where are they white?" he added, muttering an oath, and rubbing them upon his handkerchief. "I don't believe they *are* white."

"Now I look again, they are not," replied his friend. "They are coming right again."

"Say what you were going to say," cried Jonas angrily, "and let my face be! As long as I can show my teeth when I want to (and I can do that pretty well), the colour of my lips is not material."

"Quite true," said Tigg. "I was only going to say that you are too quick and active for our friend. He is too shy to cope with such a man as you, but does his duty well. Oh very well! But what is a light sleeper?"

"Hang a light sleeper!" exclaimed Jonas pettishly.

"No, no," interrupted Tigg. "No. We'll not do that."

"A light sleeper ain't a heavy one," said Jonas in his sulky way: "don't sleep much, and don't sleep well, and don't sleep sound."

"And dreams," said Tigg, "and cries out in an ugly manner; and when the candle burns down in the night, is in an agony; and all that sort of thing. I see!"

They were silent for a little time. Then Jonas spoke:

"Now we've done with child's talk, I want to have a word with you. I want to have a word with you before we meet up yonder to-day. I am not satisfied with the state of affairs."

"Not satisfied!" cried Tigg. "The money comes in well."

"The money comes in well enough," retorted Jonas: "but it don't come out well enough. It can't be got at, easily enough. I haven't sufficient power; it's all in your hands. Ecod! what with one of your bye-laws, and another of your bye-laws, and your votes in this capacity, and your votes in that capacity, and your official rights, and your individual rights, and other people's rights who are only you again, there are no rights left for me. Everybody else's rights are my wrongs. What's the use of my having a voice if it's always drowned? I might as well be dumb, and it would be much less aggravating. I'm not agoing to stand that, you know."

"No!" said Tigg in an insinuating tone.

"No!" returned Jonas, "I'm not indeed. I'll play Old Gooseberry with the office, and make you glad to buy me out at a good high figure, if you try any of your tricks with me."

"I give you my honour——," Montague began.

"Oh! confound your honour," interrupted Jonas, who became more coarse and quarrelsome as the other remonstrated, which may have been a part of Mr. Montague's intention: "I want a little more control over the money. You may have all the honour, if you like; I'll

never bring you to book for that. But I'm not agoing to stand it, as it is now. If you should take it into your honourable head to go abroad with the bank, I don't see much to prevent you. Well! That won't do. I've had some very good dinners here, but they'd come too dear on such terms: and therefore, that won't do."

"I am unfortunate to find you in this humour," said Tigg, with a remarkable kind of smile: "for I was going to propose to you—for your own advantage; solely for your own advantage—that you should venture a little more with us."

"Was you, by G—?" said Jonas, with a short laugh.

"Yes. And to suggest," pursued Montague, "that surely you have friends; indeed, I know you have; who would answer our purpose admirably, and whom we should be delighted to receive."

"How kind of you! You'd be delighted to receive 'em, would you?" said Jonas, bantering.

"I give you my sacred honour, quite transported. As your friends observe!"

"Exactly," said Jonas: "as my friends, of course. You'll be very much delighted when you get 'em, I have no doubt. And it'll be all to my advantage, won't it?"

"It will be very much to your advantage," answered Montague, poising a brush in each hand, and looking steadily upon him. "It will be very much to your advantage, I assure you."

"And you can tell me how," said Jonas, "can't you?"

"SHALL I tell you how?" returned the other.

"I think you had better," said Jonas. "Strange things have been done in the Insurance way before now, by strange sorts of men, and I mean to take care of myself."

"Chuzzlewit!" replied Montague, leaning forward, with his arms upon his knees, and looking full into his face. "Strange things have been done, and are done every day; not only in our way, but in a variety of other ways; and no one suspects them. But ours, as you say, my good friend, is a strange way; and we strangely happen, sometimes, to come into the knowledge of very strange events."

He beckoned to Jonas to bring his chair nearer; and looking slightly round, as if to remind him of the presence of Nadgett, whispered in his ear.

From red to white; from white to red again; from red to yellow; then to a cold, dull, awful, sweat-bedabbled blue. In that short whisper,

all these changes fell upon the face of Jonas Chuzzlewit; and when at last he laid his hand upon the whisperer's mouth, appalled, lest any syllable of what he said should reach the ears of the third person present, it was as bloodless, and as heavy as the hand of Death.

He drew his chair away, and sat a spectacle of terror, misery, and rage. He was afraid to speak, or look, or move, or sit still. Abject, crouching, and miserable, he was a greater degradation to the form he bore, than if he had been a loathsome wound from head to heel.

His companion leisurely resumed his dressing and completed it, glancing sometimes with a smile at the transformation he had effected, but never speaking once.

"You'll not object," he said, when he was quite equipped, "to venture further with us, Chuzzlewit, my friend?"

His pale lips faintly stammered out a "No."

"Well said! That's like yourself. Do you know I was thinking yesterday that your father-in-law, relying on your advice as a man of great sagacity in money matters, as no doubt you are, would join us, if the thing were well presented to him. He has money?"

"Yes, he has money."

"Shall I leave Mr. Pecksniff to you? Will you undertake for Mr. Pecksniff?"

"I'll try. I'll do my best."

"A thousand thanks," replied the other, clapping him upon the shoulder. "Shall we walk down-stairs? Mr. Nadgett! Follow us, if you please."

They went down in that order. Whatever Jonas felt in reference to Montague; whatever sense he had of being caged, and barred, and trapped, and having fallen down into a pit of deepest ruin; whatever thoughts came crowding on his mind even at that early time, of one terrible chance of escape, of one red glimmer in a sky of blackness; he no more thought that the slinking figure half a dozen stairs behind him was his pursuing Fate, than that the other figure at his side was his good angel.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CONTAINING SOME FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE PINCHES; WITH STRANGE NEWS FROM THE CITY, NARROWLY CONCERNING TOM.

PLEASANT little Ruth! Cheerful, tidy, bustling, quiet little Ruth! No doll's house ever yielded greater delight to its young mistress, than little Ruth derived from her glo-

rious dominion over the triangular parlour and the two small bed-rooms.

To be Tom's housekeeper. What dignity! Housekeeping, upon the commonest terms, associated itself with elevated responsibilities of all sorts and kinds; but housekeeping for Tom, implied the utmost complication of grave trusts and mighty charges. Well might she take the keys out of the little chiffonier which held the tea and sugar; and out of the two little damp cupboards down by the fire-place, where the very black beetles got mouldy, and had the shine taken out of their backs by envious mildew; and jingle them upon a ring before Tom's eyes when he came down to breakfast! Well might she, laughing musically, put them up in that blessed little pocket of hers with a merry pride! For it was such a grand novelty to be mistress of anything, that if she had been the most relentless and despotic of all little housekeepers, she might have pleaded just that much for her excuse, and have been honourably acquitted.

So far from being despotic, however, there was a coyness about her very way of pouring out the tea, which Tom quite revelled in. And when she asked him what he would like to have for dinner, and faltered out "chops" as a reasonably good suggestion after their last night's successful supper, Tom grew quite facetious and rallied her desperately.

"I don't know, Tom," said his sister, blushing, "I am not quite confident, but I think I could make a beef-steak pudding, if I tried, Tom."

"In the whole catalogue of cookery, there is nothing I should like so much as a beef-steak pudding," cried Tom: slapping his leg to give the greater force to his reply.

"Yes, dear, that's excellent! But if it should happen not to come quite right the first time," his sister faltered; "if it should happen not to be a pudding exactly, but should turn out a stew, or a soup, or something of that sort, you'll not be vexed, Tom, will you?"

The serious way in which she looked at Tom; the way in which Tom looked at her; and the way in which she gradually broke into a merry laugh at her own expense; would have enchanted you.

"Why," said Tom, "this is capital. It gives us a new, and quite an uncommon interest in the dinner. We put into a lottery for a beef-steak pudding, and it is impossible to say what we may get. We may make some wonderful discovery, perhaps, and produce such a dish as never was known before."

"I shall not be at all surprised if we do, Tom," returned his sister, still laughing merrily, "or if it should prove to be such a dish as we shall not feel very anxious to produce again; but the meat must come out of the saucepan at last, somehow or other, you know. We can't cook it into nothing at all; that's a great comfort. So if you like to venture, *I* will."

"I have not the least doubt," rejoined Tom, "that it will come out an excellent pudding; or at all events, I am sure that I shall think so. There is naturally something so handy and brisk about you, Ruth, that if you said you could make a bowl of faultless turtle soup, I should believe you."

And Tom was right. She was precisely that sort of person. Nobody ought to have been able to resist her coaxing manner; and nobody had any business to try. Yet she never seemed to know it was her manner at all. That was the best of it.

Well! she washed up the breakfast cups, chatting away the whole time, and telling Tom all sorts of anecdotes about the brass and copper founder; put everything in its place; made the room as neat as herself;—you must not suppose its shape was half as neat as hers though, or anything like it—and brushed Tom's old hat round and round and round again, until it was as sleek as Mr. Pecksniff. Then she discovered, all in a moment, that Tom's shirt-collar was frayed at the edge; and flying up-stairs for a needle and thread, came flying down again with her thimble on, and set it right with wonderful expertness; never once sticking the needle into his face, although she was humming his pet tune from first to last, and beating time with the fingers of her left hand upon his neckcloth. She had no sooner done this, than off she was again; and there she stood once more, as brisk and busy as a bee, tying that compact little chin of hers into an equally compact little bonnet: intent on bustling out to the butcher's, without a minute's loss of time: and inviting Tom to come and see the steak cut, with his own eyes. As to Tom, he was ready to go anywhere: so, off they trotted, arm-in-arm, as nimbly as you please: saying to each other what a quiet street it was to lodge in, and how very cheap, and what an airy situation.

To see the butcher slap the steak, before he laid it on the block, and give his knife a sharpening, was to forget breakfast instantly. It was agreeable, too—it really was—to see him cut it off so smooth and juicy. There was nothing savage in the act, although the knife was large and keen; it was a piece of art, high

art; there was delicacy of touch, clearness of tone, skilful handling of the subject, fine shading. It was the triumph of mind over matter; quite.

Perhaps the greenest cabbage-leaf ever grown in a garden was wrapped about this steak, before it was delivered over to Tom. But the butcher had a sentiment for his business, and knew how to refine upon it. When he saw Tom putting the cabbage-leaf into his pocket awkwardly, he begged to be allowed to do it for him; "for meat," he said, with some emotion, "must be humoured, not drove."

Back they went to the lodgings again, after they had bought some eggs, and flour, and such small matters; and Tom sat gravely down to write at one end of the parlour table, while Ruth prepared to make the pudding, at the other end; for there was nobody in the house but an old woman (the landlord being a mysterious sort of man, who went out early in the morning, and was scarcely ever seen); and, saving in mere household drudgery, they waited on themselves.

"What are you writing, Tom?" inquired his sister, laying her hand upon his shoulder.

"Why, you see, my dear," said Tom, leaning back in his chair, and looking up in her face, "I am very anxious, of course, to obtain some suitable employment; and before Mr. Westlock comes this afternoon, I think I may as well prepare a little description of myself and my qualifications; such as he could show to any friend of his."

"You had better do the same for me, Tom, also," said his sister, casting down her eyes. "I should dearly like to keep house for you, and take care of you always, Tom; but we are not rich enough for that."

"We are not rich," returned Tom, "certainly; and we may be much poorer. But we will not part, if we can help it. No, no: we will make up our minds, Ruth, that, unless we are so very unfortunate as to render me quite sure that you would be better off away from me than with me, we will battle it out together. I am certain we shall be happier if we can battle it out together. Don't you think we shall?"

"Think, Tom!"

"Oh, tut, tut!" interposed Tom, tenderly. "You mustn't cry."

"No, no; I won't, Tom. But you can't afford it, dear. You can't, indeed."

"We don't know that," said Tom. "How are we to know that, yet awhile, and without trying? Lord bless my soul!" Tom's energy became quite grand; "There is no knowing

what may happen, if we try hard. And I am sure we can live contentedly upon a very little—if we can only get it.”

“Yes: that I am sure we can, Tom.”

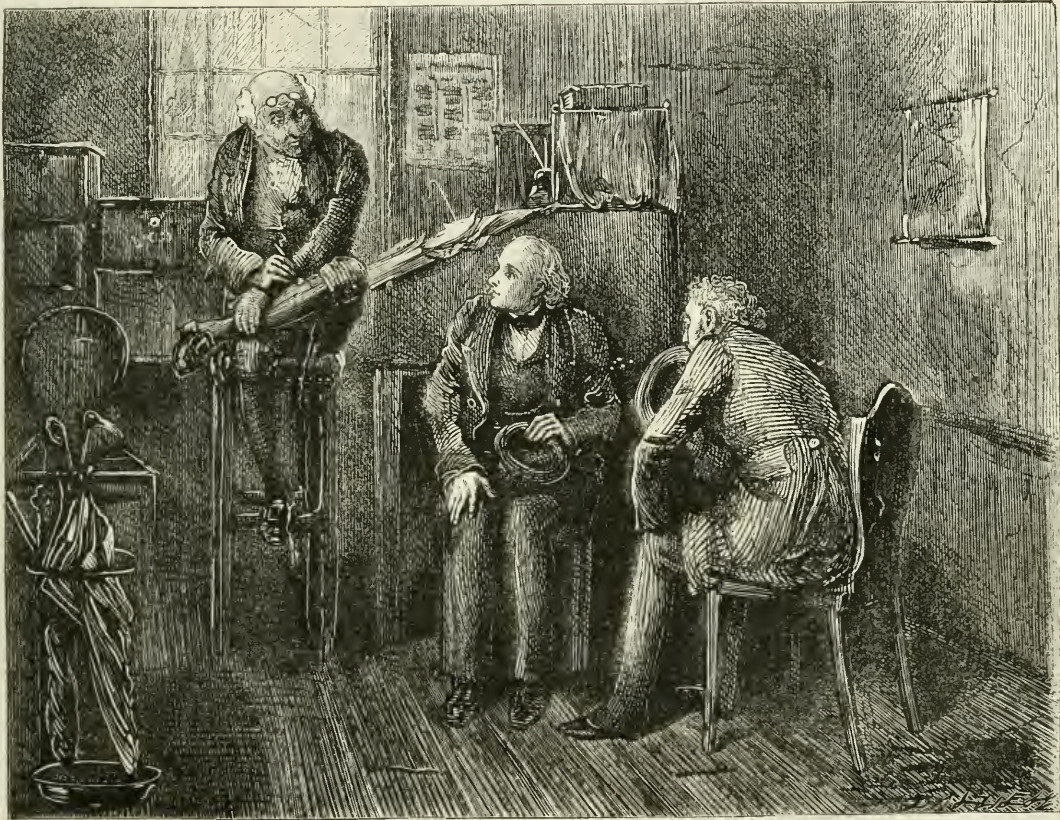
“Why, then,” said Tom, “we must try for it. My friend, John Westlock, is a capital fellow, and very shrewd and intelligent. I’ll take his advice. We’ll talk it over with him—both of us together. You’ll like John very much, when you come to know him, I am certain. Don’t

cry, don’t cry. *You* make a beef-steak pudding, indeed!” said Tom, giving her a gentle push. “Why, you haven’t boldness enough for a dumpling!”

“You *will* call it a pudding, Tom. Mind! I told you not!”

“I may as well call it that till it proves to be something else,” said Tom. “Oh, you are going to work in earnest, are you?”

Aye, aye! That she was. And in such



“I CAN’T SAY; IT’S IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL. I REALLY HAVE NO IDEA. BUT,” SAID FIPS, TAKING OFF A VERY DEEP IMPRESSION OF THE WAFER-STAMP UPON THE CALF OF HIS LEFT LEG, AND LOOKING STEADILY AT TOM, “I DON’T KNOW THAT IT’S A MATTER OF MUCH CONSEQUENCE.”

pleasant earnest, moreover, that Tom’s attention wandered from his writing every moment. First, she tripped down-stairs into the kitchen for the flour, then for the pie-board, then for the eggs, then for the butter, then for a jug of water, then for the rolling-pin, then for a pudding-basin, then for the pepper, then for the salt; making a separate journey for everything, and laughing every time she started off afresh. When all the materials were collected, she was horrified to find she had no apron on, and so

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 20.

ran *up*-stairs, by way of variety, to fetch it. She didn’t put it on up-stairs, but came dancing down with it in her hand; and being one of those little women to whom an apron is a most becoming little vanity, it took an immense time to arrange; having to be carefully smoothed down beneath—Oh, heaven, what a wicked little stomacher! and to be gathered up into little plaits by the strings before it could be tied, and to be tapped, rebuked, and wheedled, at the pockets, before it would set right, which at last

it did, and when it did—but never mind; this is a sober chronicle. And then, there were cuffs to be tucked up, for fear of flour: and she had a little ring to pull off her finger, which wouldn't come off (foolish little ring!); and during the whole of these preparations she looked demurely every now and then at Tom, from under her dark eye-lashes as if they were all a part of the pudding, and indispensable to its composition.

For the life and soul of him, Tom could get no further in his writing than, "A respectable young man, aged thirty-five," and this, notwithstanding the show she made of being supernaturally quiet, and going about on tiptoe, lest she should disturb him: which only served as an additional means of distracting his attention, and keeping it upon her.

"Tom," she said at last, in high glee. "Tom!"

"What now?" said Tom, repeating to himself, "aged thirty-five!"

"Will you look here a moment, please?"

As if he hadn't been looking all the time!

"I am going to begin, Tom. Don't you wonder why I butter the inside of the basin?" said his busy little sister.

"Not more than you do, I dare say," replied Tom, laughing. "For I believe you don't know anything about it."

"What an infidel you are, Tom! How else do you think it would turn out easily when it was done? For a civil-engineer and land-surveyor not to know that! My goodness, Tom!"

It was wholly out of the question to try to write. Tom lined out "A respectable young man, aged thirty-five," and sat looking on, pen in hand, with one of the most loving smiles imaginable.

Such a busy little woman as she was! So full of self-importance, and trying so hard not to smile, or seem uncertain about anything! It was a perfect treat to Tom to see her with her brows knit, and her rosy lips pursed up, kneading away at the crust, rolling it out, cutting it up into strips, lining the basin with it, shaving it off fine round the rim, chopping up the steak into small pieces, raining down pepper and salt upon them, packing them into the basin, pouring in cold water for gravy, and never venturing to steal a look in his direction, lest her gravity should be disturbed; until, at last, the basin being quite full and only wanting the top crust, she clapped her hands, all covered with paste and flour, at Tom, and burst out heartily into such a charming little laugh of triumph, that the pudding need have had no other seasoning

to commend it to the taste of any reasonable man on earth.

"Where's the pudding?" said Tom. For he was cutting his jokes, Tom was.

"Where!" she answered, holding it up with both hands. "Look at it!"

"That a pudding!" said Tom.

"It will be, you stupid fellow, when it's covered in," returned his sister. Tom still pretending to look incredulous, she gave him a tap on the head with the rolling-pin, and still laughing merrily, had returned to the composition of the top-crust, when she started and turned very red. Tom started, too, for following her eyes, he saw John Westlock in the room.

"Why, my goodness, John! How did you come in?"

"I beg pardon," said John—"your sister's pardon especially—but I met an old lady at the street door, who requested me to enter here; and as you didn't hear me knock, and the door was open, I made bold to do so. I hardly know," said John, with a smile, "why any of us should be disconcerted at my having accidentally intruded upon such an agreeable domestic occupation, so very agreeably and skilfully pursued; but I must confess that I am. Tom, will you kindly come to my relief?"

"Mr. John Westlock," said Tom. "My sister."

"I hope, that as the sister of so old a friend," said John, laughing, "you will have the goodness to detach your first impressions of me from my unfortunate entrance."

"My sister is not indisposed perhaps to say the same to you on her own behalf," retorted Tom.

John said, of course, that this was quite unnecessary, for he had been transfixed in silent admiration; and he held out his hand to Miss Pinch; who couldn't take it, however, by reason of the flour and paste upon her own. This, which might seem calculated to increase the general confusion and render matters worse, had in reality the best effect in the world, for neither of them could help laughing; and so they both found themselves on easy terms immediately.

"I am delighted to see you," said Tom. "Sit down."

"I can only think of sitting down on one condition," returned his friend; "and that is, that your sister goes on with the pudding, as if you were still alone."

"That I am sure she will," said Tom. "On one other condition, and that is, that you stay and help us to eat it."

Poor little Ruth was seized with a palpitation of the heart when Tom committed this appalling

indiscretion, for she felt that if the dish turned out a failure, she never would be able to hold up her head before John Westlock again. Quite unconscious of her state of mind, John accepted the invitation with all imaginable heartiness; and after a little more pleasantry concerning this same pudding, and the tremendous expectations he made believe to entertain of it, she blushing resumed her occupation, and he took a chair.

"I am here much earlier than I intended, Tom; but I will tell you what brings me, and I think I can answer for your being glad to hear it. Is that anything you wish to show me?"

"Oh dear no!" cried Tom, who had forgotten the blotted scrap of paper in his hand, until this inquiry brought it to his recollection. "'A respectable young man, aged thirty-five'—The beginning of a description of myself. That's all."

"I don't think you will have occasion to finish it, Tom. But how is it, you never told me you had friends in London?"

Tom looked at his sister with all his might; and certainly his sister looked with all her might at him.

"Friends in London!" echoed Tom.

"Ah!" said Westlock, "to be sure."

"Have *you* any friends in London, Ruth, my dear?" asked Tom.

"No, Tom."

"I am very happy to hear that *I* have," said Tom, "but it's news to me. I never knew it. They must be capital people to keep a secret, John."

"You shall judge for yourself," returned the other. "Seriously, Tom, here is the plain state of the case. As I was sitting at breakfast this morning, there comes a knock at my door."

"On which you cried out, very loud, 'Come in!'" suggested Tom.

"So I did. And the person who knocked, not being a respectable young man aged thirty-five, from the country, came in when he was invited, instead of standing gaping and staring about him on the landing. Well! When he came in, I found he was a stranger; a grave, business-like, sedate-looking, stranger. 'Mr. Westlock?' said he. 'That is my name,' said I. 'The favour of a few words with you?' said he. 'Pray be seated, sir,' said I."

Here John stopped for an instant, to glance towards the table, where Tom's sister, listening attentively, was still busy with the basin, which by this time made a noble appearance. Then he resumed:

"The pudding having taken a chair, Tom"—

"What!" cried Tom.

"Having taken a chair."

"You said a pudding."

"No, no," replied John, colouring rather; "a chair. The idea of a stranger coming into my rooms at half-past eight o'clock in the morning, and taking a pudding! Having taken a chair, Tom, a chair—amazed me by opening the conversation thus: 'I believe you are acquainted, sir, with Mr. Thomas Pinch?'"

"No!" cried Tom.

"His very words, I assure you. I told him I was. Did I know where you were at present residing? Yes. In London? Yes. He had casually heard, in a roundabout way, that you had left your situation with Mr. Pecksniff. Was that the fact? Yes, it was. Did you want another? Yes, you did."

"Certainly," said Tom, nodding his head.

"Just what I impressed upon him. You may rest assured that I set that point beyond the possibility of any mistake, and gave him distinctly to understand that he might make up his mind about it. Very well."

"Then," said he, "I think I can accommodate him."

Tom's sister stopped short.

"Lord bless me!" cried Tom. "Ruth, my dear, 'think I can accommodate him.'"

"Of course I begged him," pursued John Westlock, glancing at Tom's sister, who was not less eager in her interest than Tom himself, "to proceed, and said that I would undertake to see you immediately. He replied that he had very little to say, being a man of few words, but such as it was, it was to the purpose: and so, indeed, it turned out: for he immediately went on to tell me that a friend of his was in want of a kind of secretary and librarian; and that although the salary was small, being only a hundred pounds a year, with neither board nor lodging, still the duties were not heavy, and there the post was. Vacant, and ready for your acceptance."

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom; "a hundred pounds a year! My dear John! Ruth, my love! A hundred pounds a year!"

"But the strangest part of the story," resumed John Westlock, laying his hand on Tom's wrist, to bespeak his attention, and repress his ecstasies for the moment: "the strangest part of the story, Miss Pinch, is this. I don't know this man from Adam; neither does this man know Tom."

"He can't," said Tom, in great perplexity, "if he's a Londoner. I don't know any one in London."

"And on my observing," John resumed, still

keeping his hand upon Tom's wrist. "that I had no doubt he would excuse the freedom I took, in inquiring who directed him to me; how he came to know of the change which had taken place in my friend's position; and how he came to be acquainted with my friend's peculiar fitness for such an office as he had described; he drily said that he was not at liberty to enter into any explanations."

"Not at liberty to enter into any explanations!" repeated Tom, drawing a long breath.

"I must be perfectly aware," he said," John added, "that to any person who had ever been in Mr. Pecksniff's neighbourhood, Mr. Thomas Pinch and his acquirements were as well known as the Church steeple, or the Blue Dragon."

"The Blue Dragon!" repeated Tom, staring alternately at his friend and his sister.

"Aye; think of that! He spoke as familiarly of the Blue Dragon, I give you my word, as if he had been Mark Tapley. I opened my eyes, I can tell you, when he did so; but I could not fancy I had ever seen the man before, although he said with a smile, 'You know the Blue Dragon, Mr. Westlock; you kept it up there, once or twice, yourself.' Kept it up there! So I did. You remember, Tom?"

Tom nodded with great significance, and, falling into a state of deeper perplexity than before, observed that this was the most unaccountable and extraordinary circumstance he had ever heard of in his life.

"Unaccountable!" his friend repeated. "I became afraid of the man. Though it was broad day, and bright sunshine, I was positively afraid of him. I declare I half suspected him to be a supernatural visitor, and not a mortal, until he took out a common-place description of pocket-book, and handed me this card."

"Mr. Fips," said Tom, reading it aloud. "Austin Friars. Austin Friars sounds ghostly, John."

"Fips don't, I think," was John's reply. "But there he lives, Tom, and there he expects us to call this morning. And now you know as much of this strange incident as I do, upon my honour."

Tom's face, between his exultation in the hundred pounds a year, and his wonder at this narration, was only to be equalled by the face of his sister, on which there sat the very best expression of blooming surprise that any painter could have wished to see. What the beef-steak pudding would have come to, if it had not been by this time finished, astrology itself could hardly determine.

"Tom," said Ruth, after a little hesitation,

"perhaps Mr. Westlock, in his friendship for you, knows more of this than he chooses to tell."

"No, indeed!" cried John, eagerly. "It is not so, I assure you. I wish it were. I cannot take credit to myself, Miss Pinch, for any such thing. All that I know, or, so far as I can judge, am likely to know, I have told you."

"Couldn't you know more, if you thought proper?" said Ruth, scraping the pie-board industriously.

"No," retorted John. "Indeed, no. It is very ungenerous in you to be so suspicious of me, when I repose implicit faith in you. I have unbounded confidence in the pudding, Miss Pinch."

She laughed at this, but they soon got back into a serious vein, and discussed the subject with profound gravity. Whatever else was obscure in the business, it appeared to be quite plain that Tom was offered a salary of one hundred pounds a year; and this being the main point, the surrounding obscurity rather set it off than otherwise.

Tom, being in a great flutter, wished to start for Austin Friars instantly, but they waited nearly an hour, by John's advice, before they departed. Tom made himself as spruce as he could before leaving home, and when John Westlock, through the half-opened parlour door, had glimpses of that brave little sister brushing the collar of his coat in the passage, taking up loose stitches in his gloves, and hovering lightly about and about him, touching him up here and there in the height of her quaint, little, old-fashioned tidiness, he called to mind the fancy-portraits of her on the wall of the Pecksniffian work-room, and decided with uncommon indignation that they were gross libels, and not half pretty enough; though, as hath been mentioned in its place, the artists always made those sketches beautiful, and he had drawn at least a score of them with his own hands.

"Tom," he said, as they were walking along, "I begin to think you must be somebody's son."

"I suppose I am," Tom answered in his quiet way.

"But I mean somebody's of consequence."

"Bless your heart," replied Tom, "my poor father was of no consequence, nor my mother either."

"You remember them perfectly, then?"

"Remember them? oh dear yes. My poor mother was the last. She died when Ruth was a mere baby, and then we both became a charge upon the savings of that good old grandmother I used to tell you of. You remember! Oh!

There's nothing romantic in our history, John."

"Very well," said John in quiet despair. "Then there is no way of accounting for my visitor of this morning. So we'll not try, Tom."

They did try, notwithstanding, and never left off trying until they got to Austin Friars, where, in a very dark passage on the first floor, oddly situated at the back of a house, across some leads, they found a little blear-eyed glass door up in one corner, with Mr. Fips painted on it in characters which were meant to be transparent. There was also a wicked old sideboard hiding in the gloom hard by, meditating designs upon the ribs of visitors; and an old mat, worn into lattice work, which, being useless as a mat (even if anybody could have seen it, which was impossible), had for many years directed its industry into another channel, and regularly tripped up every one of Mr. Fips's clients.

Mr. Fips, hearing a violent concussion between a human hat and his office door, was apprised, by the usual means of communication, that somebody had come to call upon him, and giving that somebody admission, observed that it was "rather dark."

"Dark indeed," John whispered in Tom Pinch's ear. "Not a bad place to dispose of a countryman in, I should think, Tom."

Tom had been already turning over in his mind the possibility of their having been tempted into that region to furnish forth a pie; but the sight of Mr. Fips, who was small and spare, and looked peaceable, and wore black shorts and powder, dispelled his doubts.

"Walk in," said Mr. Fips.

They walked in. And a mighty yellow-jaundiced little office Mr. Fips had of it: with a great, black, sprawling splash upon the floor in one corner, as if some old clerk had cut his throat there, years ago, and had let out ink instead of blood.

"I have brought my friend Mr. Pinch, sir," said John Westlock.

"Be pleased to sit," said Mr. Fips.

They occupied the two chairs, and Mr. Fips took the office stool, from the stuffing whereof he drew forth a piece of horse-hair of immense length, which he put into his mouth with a great appearance of appetite.

He looked at Tom Pinch curiously, but with an entire freedom from any such expression as could be reasonably construed into an unusual display of interest. After a short silence, during which Mr. Fips was so perfectly unembarrassed as to render it manifest that he could have broken it sooner without hesitation, if he

had felt inclined to do so, he asked if Mr. Westlock had made his offer fully known to Mr. Pinch.

John answered in the affirmative.

"And you think it worth your while, sir, do you?" Mr. Fips inquired of Tom.

"I think it a piece of great good fortune, sir," said Tom. "I am exceedingly obliged to you for the offer."

"Not to me," said Mr. Fips. "I act upon instructions."

"To your friend, sir, then," said Tom. "To the gentleman with whom I am to engage, and whose confidence I shall endeavour to deserve. When he knows me better, sir, I hope he will not lose his good opinion of me. He will find me punctual and vigilant, and anxious to do what is right. That I think I can answer for, and so," looking towards him, "can Mr. Westlock."

"Most assuredly," said John.

Mr. Fips appeared to have some little difficulty in resuming the conversation. To relieve himself, he took up the wafer-stamp, and began stamping capital F's all over his legs.

"The fact is," said Mr. Fips, "that my friend is not, at this present moment, in town."

Tom's countenance fell; for he thought this equivalent to telling him that his appearance did not answer; and that Fips must look out for somebody else.

"When do you think he will be in town, sir?" he asked.

"I can't say; it's impossible to tell. I really have no idea. But," said Fips, taking off a very deep impression of the wafer-stamp upon the calf of his left leg, and looking steadily at Tom, "I don't know that it's a matter of much consequence."

Poor Tom inclined his head deferentially, but appeared to doubt that.

"I say," repeated Mr. Fips, "that I don't know it's a matter of much consequence. The business lies entirely between yourself and me, Mr. Pinch. With reference to your duties, I can set you going; and with reference to your salary, I can pay it. Weekly," said Mr. Fips, putting down the wafer-stamp, and looking at John Westlock and Tom Pinch by turns, "weekly; in this office; at any time between the hours of four and five o'clock in the afternoon." As Mr. Fips said this, he made up his face as if he were going to whistle. But he didn't.

"You are very good," said Tom, whose countenance was now suffused with pleasure: "and nothing can be more satisfactory or

straightforward. My attendance will be required—”

“From half-past nine to four o'clock or so, I should say,” interrupted Mr. Fips. “About that.”

“I did not mean the hours of attendance,” retorted Tom, “which are light and easy, I am sure; but the place.”

“Oh, the place! The place is in the Temple.”

Tom was delighted.

“Perhaps,” said Mr. Fips, “you would like to see the place.”

“Oh dear!” cried Tom. “I shall only be too glad to consider myself engaged, if you will allow me; without any further reference to the place.”

“You may consider yourself engaged, by all means,” said Mr. Fips: “you couldn't meet me at the Temple Gate in Fleet Street, in an hour from this time, I suppose, could you?”

Certainly Tom could.

“Good,” said Mr. Fips, rising. “Then I will show you the place: and you can begin your attendance to-morrow morning. In an hour, therefore, I shall see you. You too, Mr. Westlock? Very good. Take care how you go. It's rather dark.”

With this remark, which seemed superfluous, he shut them out upon the staircase, and they groped their way into the street again. The interview had done so little to remove the mystery in which Tom's new engagement was involved, and had done so much to thicken it, that neither could help smiling at the puzzled looks of the other. They agreed, however, that the introduction of Tom to his new office and office companions could hardly fail to throw a light upon the subject; and therefore postponed its further consideration until after the fulfilment of the appointment they had made with Mr. Fips.

After looking in at John Westlock's chambers, and devoting a few spare minutes to the Boar's Head, they issued forth again to the place of meeting. The time agreed upon had not quite come; but Mr. Fips was already at the Temple Gate, and expressed his satisfaction at their punctuality.

He led the way through sundry lanes and courts, into one more quiet and more gloomy than the rest, and singling out a certain house, ascended a common staircase: taking from his pocket, as he went, a bunch of rusty keys. Stopping before a door upon an upper story, which had nothing but a yellow smear of paint where custom would have placed the tenant's name, he began to beat the dust out of one of

these keys, very deliberately, upon the great broad hand-rail of the balustrade.

“You had better have a little plug made,” he said, looking round at Tom, after blowing a shrill whistle into the barrel of the key. “It's the only way of preventing them from getting stopped up. You'll find the lock go the better, too, I dare say, for a little oil.”

Tom thanked him; but was too much occupied with his own speculations, and John Westlock's looks, to be very talkative. In the meantime, Mr. Fips opened the door, which yielded to his hand very unwillingly, and with a horribly discordant sound. He took the key out when he had done so, and gave it to Tom.

“Aye, aye!” said Mr. Fips. “The dust lies rather thick here.”

Truly, it did. Mr. Fips might have gone so far as to say very thick. It had accumulated everywhere; lay deep on everything; and in one part, where a ray of sun shone through a crevice in the shutter and struck upon the opposite wall, it went twirling round and round, like a gigantic squirrel-cage.

Dust was the only thing in the place that had any motion about it. When their conductor admitted the light freely, and lifting up the heavy window-sash, let in the summer air, he showed the mouldering furniture, discoloured wainscoting and ceiling, rusty stove, and ashy hearth, in all their inert neglect. Close to the door, there stood a candlestick, with an extinguisher upon it: as if the last man who had been there had paused, after securing a retreat, to take a parting look at the dreariness he left behind, and then had shut out light and life together, and closed the place up like a tomb.

There were two rooms on that floor; and in the first or outer one a narrow staircase, leading to two more above. These last were fitted up as bed-chambers. Neither in them, nor in the rooms below, was any scarcity of convenient furniture observable, although the fittings were of a by-gone fashion; but solitude and want of use seemed to have rendered it unfit for any purposes of comfort, and to have given it a grisly haunted air.

Movables of every kind lay strewn about, without the least attempt at order, and were intermixed with boxes, hampers, and all sorts of lumber. On all the floors were piles of books, to the amount, perhaps, of some thousands of volumes: these, still in bales: those, wrapped in paper, as they had been purchased: others scattered singly or in heaps: not one upon the shelves which lined the walls. To these Mr. Fips called Tom's attention.

"Before anything else can be done, we must have them put in order, catalogued and ranged upon the book-shelves, Mr. Pinch. That will do to begin with, I think, sir."

Tom rubbed his hands in the pleasant anticipation of a task so congenial to his taste, and said:

"An occupation full of interest for me, I assure you. It will occupy me, perhaps, until Mr. —"

"Until Mr. —" repeated Fips; as much as to ask Tom what he was stopping for.

"I forgot that you had not mentioned the gentleman's name," said Tom.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Fips, pulling on his glove, "didn't I? No, by-the-bye, I don't think I did. Ah! I dare say he'll be here soon. You will get on very well together, I have no doubt. I wish you success, I am sure. You won't forget to shut the door? It'll lock of itself if you slam it. Half-past nine, you know. Let us say from half-past nine to four, or half-past four, or thereabouts; one day, perhaps, a little earlier, another day, perhaps, a little later, according as you feel disposed, and as you arrange your work. Mr. Fips, Austin Friars, of course you'll remember? And you won't forget to slam the door, if you please?"

He said all this in such a comfortable, easy manner, that Tom could only rub his hands, and nod his head, and smile in acquiescence, which he was still doing, when Mr. Fips walked coolly out.

"Why, he's gone!" cried Tom.

"And what's more, Tom," said John Westlock, seating himself upon a pile of books, and looking up at his astonished friend, "he is evidently not coming back again; so here you are, installed. Under rather singular circumstances, Tom!"

It was such an odd affair throughout, and Tom standing there among the books with his hat in one hand and the key in the other, looked so prodigiously confounded, that his friend could not help laughing heartily. Tom himself was tickled; no less by the hilarity of his friend, than by the recollection of the sudden manner in which he had been brought to a stop, in the very height of his urbane conference with Mr. Fips; so, by degrees Tom burst out laughing too; and each making the other laugh more, they fairly roared.

When they had had their laugh out, which did not happen very soon, for, give John an inch in that way, and he was sure to take several ells, being a jovial, good-tempered fellow, they looked about them more closely, groping among the lumber for any stray means of enlightenment

that might turn up. But no scrap or shred of information could they find. The books were marked with a variety of owners' names, having, no doubt, been bought at sales, and collected here and there at different times; but whether any one of these names belonged to Tom's employer, and, if so, which of them, they had no means whatever of determining. It occurred to John as a very bright thought, to make inquiry at the steward's office, to whom the chambers belonged, or by whom they were held; but he came back no wiser than he went, the answer being, "Mr. Fips, of Austin Friars."

"After all, Tom, I begin to think it lies no deeper than this. Fips is an eccentric man; has some knowledge of Pecksniff; despises him, of course; has heard or seen enough of you to know that you are the man he wants; and engages you in his own whimsical manner."

"But why in his own whimsical manner?" asked Tom.

"Oh! why does any man entertain his own whimsical taste? Why does Mr. Fips wear shorts and powder, and Mr. Fips's next-door neighbour boots and a wig?"

Tom, being in that state of mind in which any explanation is a great relief, adopted this last one (which indeed was quite as feasible as any other) readily, and said he had no doubt of it. Nor was his faith at all shaken by his having said exactly the same thing to each suggestion of his friend's, in turn, and being perfectly ready to say it again if he had had any new solution to propose.

As he had not, Tom drew down the window-sash, and folded the shutter; and they left the rooms. He closed the door heavily, as Mr. Fips had desired him; tried it, found it all fast, and put the key in his pocket.

They made a pretty wide circuit in going back to Islington, as they had time to spare, and Tom was never tired of looking about him. It was well he had John Westlock for his companion, for most people would have been weary of his perpetual stoppages at shop-windows, and his frequent dashes into the crowded carriage-way at the peril of his life, to get the better view of church steeples, and other public buildings. But John was charmed to see him so much interested, and every time Tom came back with a beaming face from among the wheels of carts and hackney-coaches, wholly unconscious of the personal congratulations addressed to him by the drivers, John seemed to like him better than before.

There was no flour on Ruth's hands when she received them in the triangular parlour, but

there were pleasant smiles upon her face, and a crowd of welcomes shining out of every smile, and gleaming in her bright eyes. By-the-bye, how bright they were! Looking into them for but a moment, when you took her hand, you saw, in each, such a capital miniature of yourself, representing you as such a restless, flashing, eager, brilliant little fellow—

Ah! if you could only have kept them for your own miniature! But wicked, roving, restless, too impartial eyes, it was enough for any one to stand before them, and straightway, there he danced and sparkled quite as merrily as you!

The table was already spread for dinner; and though it was spread with nothing very choice in the way of glass or linen, and with green-handled knives, and very mountebanks of two-pronged forks, which seemed to be trying how far asunder they could possibly stretch their legs, without converting themselves into double the number of iron toothpicks, it wanted neither damask, silver, gold, nor china; no, nor any other garniture at all. There it was: and, being there, nothing else would have done as well.

The success of that initiative dish: that first experiment of hers in cookery: was so entire, so unalloyed and perfect, that John Westlock and Tom agreed she must have been studying the art in secret for a long time past; and urged her to make a full confession of the fact. They were exceedingly merry over this jest, and many smart things were said concerning it; but John was not as fair in his behaviour as might have been expected, for, after luring Tom Pinch on, for a long time, he suddenly went over to the enemy, and swore to everything his sister said. However, as Tom observed the same night before going to bed, it was only in joke, and John had always been famous for being polite to ladies, even when he was quite a boy. Ruth said, "Oh! indeed!" She didn't say anything else.

It is astonishing how much three people may find to talk about. They scarcely left off talking once. And it was not all lively chat which occupied them; for, when Tom related how he had seen Mr. Pecksniff's daughters, and what a change had fallen on the younger, they were very serious.

John Westlock became quite absorbed in her fortunes; asking many questions of Tom Pinch about her marriage, inquiring whether her husband was the gentleman whom Tom had brought to dine with him at Salisbury; in what degree of relationship they stood towards each other, being different persons; and taking, in short, the greatest interest in the subject. Tom then went into it at full length; he told how

Martin had gone abroad, and had not been heard of for a long time; how Dragon Mark had borne him company; how Mr. Pecksniff had got the poor old doting grandfather into his power; and how he basely sought the hand of Mary Graham. But, not a word said Tom of what lay hidden in his heart; his heart, so deep, and true, and full of honour, and yet with so much room for every gentle and unselfish thought; not a word.

Tom, Tom! The man in all this world most confident in his sagacity and shrewdness; the man in all this world most proud of his distrust of other men, and having most to show in gold and silver as the gains belonging to his creed; the meekest favourer of that wise doctrine, Every man for himself, and God for us all (there being high wisdom in the thought that the Eternal Majesty of Heaven ever was, or can be, on the side of selfish lust and love!); shall never find, oh, never find, be sure of that, the time come home to him, when all his wisdom is an idiot's folly, weighed against a simple heart!

Well, well, Tom, it was simple, too, though simple in a different way, to be so eager touching that same theatre, of which John said, when tea was done, he had the absolute command, so far as taking parties in without the payment of a sixpence, was concerned; and simpler yet, perhaps, never to suspect that when he went in first, alone, he paid the money! Simple in thee, dear Tom, to laugh and cry so heartily, at such a sorry show, so poorly shown; simple, to be so happy and loquacious trudging home with Ruth; simple, to be so surprised to find that merry present of a cookery-book, awaiting her in the parlour next morning, with the beef-steak-pudding-leaf turned down, and blotted out. There! Let the record stand! Thy quality of soul was simple, simple; quite contemptible, Tom Pinch!

CHAPTER XL.

THE PINCHES MAKE A NEW ACQUAINTANCE, AND HAVE FRESH OCCASION FOR SURPRISE AND WONDER.



HERE was a ghostly air about these uninhabited chambers in the Temple, and attending every circumstance of Tom's employment there, which had a strange charm in it. Every morning when he shut his door at Islington, he turned his face towards an atmosphere of unaccountable fascination, as surely as he turned it to the London smoke; and from that

moment it thickened round and round him all day long, until the time arrived for going home again, and leaving it, like a motionless cloud, behind.

It seemed to Tom, every morning, that he approached this ghostly mist, and became enveloped in it, by the easiest succession of degrees imaginable. Passing from the roar and rattle of the streets into the quiet court-yards of the Temple, was the first preparation. Every echo of his footsteps sounded to him like a sound from the old walls and pavements, wanting language to relate the histories of the dim,

dismal rooms; to tell him what lost documents were decaying in forgotten corners of the shut-up cellars, from whose lattices such mouldy sighs came breathing forth as he went past; to whisper of dark bins of rare old wine, bricked up in vaults among the old foundations of the Halls; or mutter in a lower tone yet darker legends of the cross-legged knights, whose marble effigies were in the church. With the first planting of his foot upon the staircase of his dusty office, all these mysteries increased; until, ascending step by step, as Tom ascended,



MRS. GAMP CREATES A SENSATION WITH HER UMBRELLA.

they attained their full growth in the solitary labours of the day.

Every day brought one recurring, never-failing source of speculation. This employer; would he come to-day, and what would he be like? For Tom could not stop short at Mr. Fips; he quite believed that Mr. Fips had spoken truly, when he said he acted for another; and what manner of man that other was, became a full-blown flower of wonder in the garden of Tom's fancy, which never faded or got trodden down.

At one time, he conceived that Mr. Pecksniff, repenting of his falsehood, might, by exertion of

his influence with some third person, have devised these means of giving him employment. He found this idea so insupportable after what had taken place between that good man and himself, that he confided it to John Westlock on the very same day; informing John that he would rather ply for hire as a porter, than fall so low in his own esteem as to accept the smallest obligation from the hands of Mr. Pecksniff. But John assured him that he (Tom Pinch) was far from doing justice to the character of Mr. Pecksniff yet, if he supposed that gentleman capable of performing a generous

action; and that he might make his mind quite easy on that head, until he saw the sun turn green and the moon black, and at the same time distinctly perceived with the naked eye twelve first-rate comets careering round those planets. In which unusual state of things, he said (and not before), it might become not absolutely lunatic to suspect Mr. Pecksniff of anything so monstrous. In short he laughed the idea down, completely; and Tom, abandoning it, was thrown upon his beam-ends again, for some other solution.

In the meantime Tom attended to his duties daily, and made considerable progress with the books: which were already reduced to some sort of order, and made a great appearance in his fairly-written catalogue. During his business hours, he indulged himself occasionally with snatches of reading; which were often, indeed, a necessary part of his pursuit; and as he usually made bold to carry one of these goblin volumes home at night (always bringing it back again next morning, in case his strange employer should appear and ask what had become of it), he led a happy, quiet, studious kind of life, after his own heart.

But, though the books were never so interesting, and never so full of novelty to Tom, they could not so enchain him, in those mysterious chambers, as to render him unconscious, for a moment, of the lightest sound. Any footstep on the flags without, set him listening attentively, and when it turned into that house, and came up, up, up, the stairs, he always thought with a beating heart, "Now I am coming face to face with him, at last!" But no footstep ever passed the floor immediately below: except his own.

This mystery and loneliness engendered fancies in Tom's mind, the folly of which his common sense could readily discover, but which his common sense was quite unable to keep away, notwithstanding; that quality being with most of us, in such a case, like the old French Police—quick at detection, but very weak as a preventive power. Misgivings, undefined, absurd, inexplicable, that there was some one hiding in the inner room—walking softly overhead, peeping in through the doorchink, doing something stealthy, anywhere where he was not—came over him a hundred times a day, making it pleasant to throw up the sash, and hold communication even with the sparrows who had built in the roof and water spout, and were twittering about the windows all day long.

He sat with the outer door wide open, at all times, that he might hear the footsteps as they

entered, and turned off into the chambers on the lower floors. He formed odd prepossessions too, regarding strangers in the streets; and would say within himself of such or such a man, who struck him as having anything uncommon in his dress or aspect, "I shouldn't wonder, now, if that were he!" But it never was. And though he actually turned back and followed more than one of these suspected individuals, in a singular belief that they were going to the place he was then upon his way from, he never got any other satisfaction by it, than the satisfaction of knowing it was not the case.

Mr. Fips, of Austin Friars, rather deepened than illumined the obscurity of his position; for, on the first occasion of Tom's waiting on him to receive his weekly pay, he said:

"Oh! by-the-bye, Mr. Pinch, you needn't mention it, if you please!"

Tom thought he was going to tell him a secret; so he said that he wouldn't on any account, and that Mr. Fips might entirely depend upon him. But as Mr. Fips said "Very good," in reply, and nothing more, Tom prompted him:

"Not on any account," repeated Tom.

Mr. Fips repeated "Very good."

"You were going to say"—Tom hinted.

"Oh dear no!" cried Fips. "Not at all." However, seeing Tom confused, he added, "I mean that you needn't mention any particulars about your place of employment, to people generally. You'll find it better not."

"I have not had the pleasure of seeing my employer yet, sir," observed Tom, putting his week's salary in his pocket.

"Haven't you?" said Fips. "No, I don't suppose you have though."

"I should like to thank him, and to know that what I have done so far, is done to his satisfaction," faltered Tom.

"Quite right," said Mr. Fips, with a yawn. "Highly creditable. Very proper."

Tom hastily resolved to try him on another tack.

"I shall soon have finished with the books," he said. "I hope that will not terminate my engagement, sir, or render me useless."

"Oh dear no!" retorted Fips. "Plenty to do: plen-ty to do! Be careful how you go. It's rather dark."

This was the very utmost extent of information Tom could ever get out of *him*. So, it was dark enough in all conscience: and if Mr. Fips expressed himself with a double meaning he had good reason for doing so.

But now a circumstance occurred, which

helped to divert Tom's thoughts from even this mystery, and to divide them between it and a new channel, which was a very Nile in itself.

The way it came about was this. Having always been an early riser, and having now no organ to engage him in sweet converse every morning, it was his habit to take a long walk before going to the Temple; and naturally inclining as a stranger, towards those parts of the town which were conspicuous for the life and animation pervading them, he became a great frequenter of the market-places, bridges, quays, and especially the steam-boat wharves; for it was very lively and fresh to see the people hurrying away upon their many schemes of business or pleasure, and it made Tom glad to think that there was that much change and freedom in the monotonous routine of city lives.

In most of these morning excursions Ruth accompanied him. As their landlord was always up and away at his business (whatever that might be, no one seemed to know) at a very early hour, the habits of the people of the house in which they lodged corresponded with their own. Thus, they had often finished their breakfast and were out in the summer-air, by seven o'clock. After a two hours' stroll they parted at some convenient point; Tom going to the Temple, and his sister returning home, as methodically as you please.

Many and many a pleasant stroll they had in Covent-Garden Market: snuffing up the perfume of the fruits and flowers, wondering at the magnificence of the pine-apples and melons; catching glimpses down side-avenues, of rows and rows of old women, seated on inverted baskets shelling peas; looking unutterable things at the fat bundles of asparagus with which the dainty shops were fortified as with a breastwork; and at the herbalists' doors, gratefully inhaling scents as of veal-stuffing yet uncooked, dreamily mixed up with capsicums, brown-paper, seeds: even with hints of lusty snails and fine young curly leeches. Many and many a pleasant stroll they had among the poultry markets, where ducks and fowls, with necks unnaturally long, lay stretched out in pairs, ready for cooking; where there were speckled eggs in mossy baskets, white country sausages beyond impeachment by surviving cat or dog, or horse or donkey, new cheeses to any wild extent, live birds in coops and cages, looking much too big to be natural, in consequence of those receptacles being much too little; rabbits, alive and dead, innumerable. Many a pleasant stroll they had among the cool, refreshing, silvery fish-stalls, with a kind of moonlight effect about their stock in trade, ex-

cepting always for the ruddy lobsters. Many a pleasant stroll among the waggon-loads of fragrant hay, beneath which dogs and tired waggons lay fast asleep, oblivious of the pieman and the public-house. But, never half so good a stroll, as down among the steam-boats on a bright morning.

There they lay, alongside of each other; hard and fast for ever, to all appearance, but designing to get out somehow, and quite confident of doing it; and in that faith shoals of passengers, and heaps of luggage, were proceeding hurriedly on board. Little steam-boats dashed up and down the stream incessantly. Tiers upon tiers of vessels, scores of masts, labyrinths of tackle, idle sails, splashing oars, gliding row-boats, lumbering barges, sunken piles, with ugly lodgings for the water-rat within their mud-discoloured nooks; church-steeple, warehouses, house-roofs, arches, bridges, men and women, children, casks, cranes, boxes, horses, coaches, idlers, and hard-labourers: there they were, all jumbled up together, any summer morning, far beyond Tom's power of separation.

In the midst of all this turmoil, there was an incessant roar from every packet's funnel, which quite expressed and carried out the uppermost emotion of the scene. They all appeared to be perspiring and bothering themselves, exactly as their passengers did; they never left off fretting and chafing, in their own hoarse manner, once; but were always panting out, without any stops, "Come along do make haste I'm very nervous come along oh good gracious we shall never get there how late you are do make haste I'm off directly come along!"

Even when they had left off, and had got safely out into the current, on the smallest provocation they began again: for the bravest packet of them all, being stopped by some entanglement in the river, would immediately begin to fume and pant afresh, "Oh here's a stoppage what's the matter do go on there I'm in a hurry it's done on purpose did you ever oh my goodness *do* go on there!" and so, in a state of mind bordering on distraction, would be last seen drifting slowly through the mist into the summer light beyond, that made it red.

Tom's ship, however, or, at least, the packet-boat in which Tom and his sister took the greatest interest on one particular occasion; was not off yet, by any means; but was at the height of its disorder. The press of passengers was very great; another steam-boat lay on each side of her; the gangways were choked up; distracted women, obviously bound for Gravesend, but turning a deaf ear to all representations

that this particular vessel was about to sail for Antwerp, persisted in secreting baskets of refreshments behind bulk-heads and water-casks, and under seats; and very great confusion prevailed.

It was so amusing, that Tom, with Ruth upon his arm, stood looking down from the wharf, as nearly regardless as it was in the nature of flesh and blood to be, of an elderly lady behind him, who had brought a large umbrella with her, and didn't know what to do with it. This tremendous instrument had a hooked handle; and its vicinity was first made known to him by a painful pressure on the windpipe, consequent upon its having caught him round the throat. Soon after disengaging himself with perfect good humour, he had a sensation of the ferule in his back; immediately afterwards, of the hook entangling his ankles; then of the umbrella generally, wandering about his hat, and flapping at it like a great bird; and lastly, of a poke or thrust below the ribs, which gave him such exceeding anguish, that he could not refrain from turning round, to offer a mild remonstrance.

Upon his turning round, he found the owner of the umbrella struggling, on tiptoe, with a countenance expressive of violent animosity, to look down upon the steam-boats; from which he inferred that she had attacked him, standing in the front row, by design, as her natural enemy.

"What a very ill-natured person you must be!" said Tom.

The lady cried out fiercely, "Where's the pelisse!"—meaning the constabulary—and went on to say, shaking the handle of the umbrella at Tom, that but for them fellers never being in the way when they was wanted, she'd have given him in charge, she would.

"If they greased their whiskers less, and minded the duties which they're paid so heavy for, a little more," she observed, "no one needn't be drove mad by scrouding so!"

She had been grievously knocked about, no doubt, for her bonnet was bent into the shape of a cocked hat. Being a fat little woman, too, she was in a state of great exhaustion and intense heat. Instead of pursuing the altercation, therefore, Tom civilly inquired what boat she wanted to go on board of.

"I suppose," returned the lady, "as nobody but yourself can want to look at a steam package, without wanting to go a boarding of it, can they! Booby!"

"Which one do you want to look at then?" said Tom. "We'll make room for you if we can. Don't be so ill-tempered."

"No blessed creetur as ever I was with in trying times," returned the lady, somewhat softened, "and they're a many in their numbers, ever brought it as a charge again myself that I was anythin' but mild and equal in my spirits. Never mind a contradicting of me, if you seems to feel it does you good, ma'am. I often says, for well you know that Sairey may be trusted not to give it back again. But I will not denige that I am worried and wexed this day, and with good reason, Lord forbid!"

By this time, Mrs. Gamp (for it was no other than that experienced practitioner) had, with Tom's assistance, squeezed and worked herself into a small corner between Ruth and the rail; where, after breathing very hard for some little time, and performing a short series of dangerous evolutions with the umbrella, she managed to establish herself pretty comfortably.

"And which of all them smoking monsters is the Ankworke's boat, I wonder, Goodness me!" cried Mrs. Gamp.

"What boat did you want?" asked Ruth.

"The Ankworke's package," Mrs. Gamp replied. "I will not deceive you, my sweet. Why should I?"

"That is the Antwerp packet in the middle," said Ruth.

"And I wish it was in Jonadge's belly, I do," cried Mrs. Gamp; appearing to confound the prophet with the whale in this miraculous aspiration.

Ruth said nothing in reply; but, as Mrs. Gamp, laying her chin against the cool iron of the rail, continued to look intently at the Antwerp boat, and every now and then to give a little groan, she inquired whether any child of hers was going abroad that morning? Or perhaps her husband, she said kindly.

"Which shows," said Mrs. Gamp, casting up her eyes, "what a little way you've travelled into this wale of life, my dear young creetur! As a good friend of mine has frequent made remark to me, which her name, my love, is Harris, Mrs. Harris through the square and up the steps a turnin' round by the tobacker shop, 'Oh Sairey, Sairey, little do we know wot lays afore us!' 'Mrs. Harris ma'am,' I says, 'not much, it's true, but more than you suppage. Our calculations, ma'am,' I says, 'respectin' wot the number of a family will be, comes most times within one, and oftener than you would suppage, exact.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs. Harris, in an awful way, 'Tell me wot is my indiwidgle number.' 'No, Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'ex-cuse me, if you please. My own,' I says, 'has fallen out of three-pair backs, and had

clamp doorsteps settled on their lungs, and one was turned up smilin' in a bedstead unbeknown. 'Therefore, ma'am,' I says, 'seek not to proticipate, but take 'em as they come and as they go.' Mine," said Mrs. Gamp, "mine is all gone, my dear young chick. And as to husbands, there's a wooden leg gone likewise home to it's account, which in its constancy of walkin' into wine vaults, and never comin' out again 'till fetched by force, was quite as weak as flesh, if not weaker."

When she had delivered this oration, Mrs. Gamp leaned her chin upon the cool iron again; and looking intently at the Antwerp packet, shook her head and groaned.

"I wouldn't," said Mrs. Gamp, "I wouldn't be a man and have such a think upon my mind!—but nobody as owned the name of man, could do it!"

Tom and his sister glanced at each other; and Ruth, after a moment's hesitation, asked Mrs. Gamp what troubled her so much.

"My dear," returned that lady, dropping her voice, "you are single, ain't you?"

Ruth laughed, blushed, and said "Yes."

"Worse luck," proceeded Mrs. Gamp, "for all parties! But others is married, and in the marriage state; and there is a dear young creetur a comin' down this mornin' to that very package, which is no more fit to trust herself to sea, than nothin' is!"

She paused here, to look over the deck of the packet in question, and on the steps leading down to it, and on the gangways. Seeming to have thus assured herself that the object of her commiseration had not yet arrived, she raised her eyes gradually up to the top of the escape-pipe, and indignantly apostrophised the vessel:

"Oh drat you!" said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella at it, "you're a nice spluttering nisy monster for a delicate young creetur to go and be a passinger by; ain't you! *You* never do no harm in that way, do you? With your hammering, and roaring, and hissing, and lampiling, you brute! Them Confugion steamers," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella again, "has done more to throw us out of our reg'lar work and bring ewents on at times when nobody counted on 'em (especially them screeching railroad ones), than all the other frights that ever was took. I have heerd of one young man, a guard upon a railway, only three year opened—well does Mrs. Harris know him, which indeed he is her own relation by her sister's marriage with a master sawyer—as is godfather at this present time to six-and-twenty blessed little strangers, equally unexpected, and

all on 'em named after the Ingeins as was the cause. Ugh!" said Mrs. Gamp, resuming her apostrophe, "one might easy know you was a man's invention, from your disregardfulness of the weakness of our natures, so one might, you brute!"

It would not have been unnatural to suppose, from the first part of Mrs. Gamp's lamentations, that she was connected with the stage-coaching or post-horsing trade. She had no means of judging of the effect of her concluding remarks upon her young companion; for she interrupted herself at this point, and exclaimed:

"There she identically goes! Poor sweet young creetur, there she goes, like a lamb to the sacrifice! If there's any illness when that wessel gets to sea," said Mrs. Gamp, prophetically, "it's murder, and I'm the witness for the persecution."

She was so very earnest on the subject, that Tom's sister (being as kind as Tom himself), could not help saying something to her in reply.

"Pray which is the lady," she inquired, "in whom you are so much interested?"

"There!" groaned Mrs. Gamp. "There she goes! A crossin' the little wooden bridge at this minute. She's a slippin' on a bit of orange-peel!" tightly clutching her umbrella. "What a turn it give me!"

"Do you mean the lady who is with that man wrapped up from head to foot in a large cloak, so that his face is almost hidden?"

"Well he may hide it!" Mrs. Gamp replied. "He's good call to be ashamed of himself. Did you see him a jerking of her wrist, then?"

"He seems to be hasty with her, indeed."

"Now he's a taking of her down into the close cabin!" said Mrs. Gamp, impatiently. "What's the man about! The deuce is in him I think. Why can't he leave her in the open air?"

He did not, whatever his reason was, but led her quickly down and disappeared himself, without loosening his cloak, or pausing on the crowded deck one moment longer than was necessary to clear their way to that part of the vessel.

Tom had not heard this little dialogue; for his attention had been engaged in an unexpected manner. A hand upon his sleeve had caused him to look round, just when Mrs. Gamp concluded her apostrophe to the steam-engine; and on his right arm, Ruth being on his left, he found their landlord: to his great surprise.

He was not so much surprised at the man's

being there, as at his having got close to him so quietly and swiftly; for another person had been at his elbow one instant before: and he had not in the meantime been conscious of any change or pressure in the knot of people among whom he stood. He and Ruth had frequently remarked how noiselessly this landlord of theirs came into and went out of his own house; but Tom was not the less amazed to see him at his elbow now.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pinch," he said in his ear. "I am rather infirm, and out of breath, and my eyes are not very good. I am not as young as I was, sir. You don't see a gentleman in a large cloak down yonder, with a lady on his arm; a lady in a veil and a black shawl; do you?"

If *he* did not, it was curious that in speaking he should have singled out from all the crowd the very people whom he described: and should have glanced hastily from them to Tom, as if he were burning to direct his wandering eyes.

"A gentleman in a large cloak!" said Tom, "and a lady in a black shawl! Let me see!"

"Yes, yes!" replied the other, with keen impatience. "A gentleman muffled up from head to foot—strangely muffled up for such a morning as this—like an invalid, with his hand to his face at this minute, perhaps. No, no, no! not there," he added, following Tom's gaze; "the other way; in that direction; down yonder." Again he indicated, but this time in his hurry, with his outstretched finger, the very spot on which the progress of these persons was checked at that moment.

"There are so many people, and so much motion, and so many objects," said Tom, "that I find it difficult to—no, I really don't see a gentleman in a large cloak, and a lady in a black shawl. There's a lady in a red shawl over there!"

"No, no, no!" cried his landlord, pointing eagerly again, "not there. The other way: the other way. Look at the cabin steps. To the left. They must be near the cabin steps. Do you see the cabin steps? There's the bell ringing already! Do you see the steps?"

"Stay!" said Tom, "you're right. Look! there they go now. Is that the gentleman you mean? Descending at this minute, with the folds of a great cloak trailing down after him?"

"The very man!" returned the other, not looking at what Tom pointed out, however, but at Tom's own face. "Will you do me a kindness, sir, a great kindness? Will you put that letter in his hand? Only give him that? He expects it. I am charged to do it by my em-

ployers, but I am late in finding him, and, not being as young as I have been, should never be able to make my way on board and off the deck again in time. Will you pardon my boldness, and do me that great kindness?"

His hands shook, and his face bespoke the utmost interest and agitation, as he pressed the letter upon Tom, and pointed to its destination, like the Tempter in some grim old carving.

To hesitate in the performance of a good-natured or compassionate office, was not in Tom's way. He took the letter; whispered Ruth to wait till he returned, which would be immediately; and ran down the steps with all the expedition he could make. There were so many people going down, so many others coming up, such heavy goods in course of transit to and fro, such a ringing of bells, blowing-off of steam, and shouting of men's voices, that he had much ado to force his way, or keep in mind to which boat he was going. But he reached the right one with good speed, and, going down the cabin-stairs immediately, descried the object of his search standing at the upper end of the saloon, with his back towards him, reading some notice which was hung against the wall. As Tom advanced to give him the letter, he started, hearing footsteps, and turned round.

What was Tom's astonishment to find in him the man with whom he had had the conflict in the field—poor Mercy's husband. Jonas!

Tom understood him to say, what the devil did he want; but it was not easy to make out what he said; he spoke so indistinctly.

"I want nothing with you for myself," said Tom; "I was asked, a moment since, to give you this letter. You were pointed out to me, but I didn't know you in your strange dress. Take it!"

He did so, opened it, and read the writing on the inside. The contents were evidently very brief; not more perhaps than one line; but they struck him like a stone from a sling. He reeled back as he read.

His emotion was so different from any Tom had ever seen before, that he stopped involuntarily. Momentary as his state of indecision was, the bell ceased while he stood there, and a hoarse voice calling down the steps, inquired if there was any one to go ashore.

"Yes," cried Jonas, "I—I am coming. Give me time. Where's that woman! Come back; come back here."

He threw open another door as he spoke, and dragged, rather than led, her forth. She was pale and frightened, and amazed to see her

old acquaintance; but had no time to speak, for they were making a great stir above; and Jonas drew her rapidly towards the deck.

"Where are we going? What is the matter?"

"We are going back," said Jonas. "I have changed my mind. I can't go. Don't question me, or I shall be the death of you, or some one else. Stop there! Stop! We're for the shore. Do you hear? We're for the shore!"

He turned, even in the madness of his hurry, and scowling darkly back at Tom, shook his clenched hand at him. There are not many human faces capable of the expression with which he accompanied that gesture.

He dragged her up, and Tom followed them. Across the deck, over the side, along the crazy plank, and up the steps, he dragged her fiercely; not bestowing any look on her, but gazing upwards all the while among the faces on the wharf. Suddenly he turned again, and said to Tom with a tremendous oath:

"Where is he?"

Before Tom, in his indignation and amazement, could return an answer to a question he so little understood, a gentleman approached Tom behind, and saluted Jonas Chuzzlewit by name. He was a gentleman of foreign appearance, with a black moustache and whiskers; and addressed him with a polite composure, strangely different from his own distracted and desperate manner.

"Chuzzlewit, my good fellow!" said the gentleman, raising his hat in compliment to Mrs. Chuzzlewit, "I ask your pardon twenty thousand times. I am most unwilling to interfere between you and a domestic trip of this nature (always so very charming and refreshing, I know, although I have not the happiness to be a domestic man myself, which is the great infelicity of my existence): but the bee-hive, my dear friend, the bee-hive—will you introduce me?"

"This is Mr. Montague," said Jonas, whom the words appeared to choke.

"The most unhappy and most penitent of men, Mrs. Chuzzlewit," pursued that gentleman, "for having been the means of spoiling this excursion; but as I tell my friend, the bee-hive; the bee-hive. You projected a short little continental trip, my dear friend, of course?"

Jonas maintained a dogged silence.

"May I die," cried Montague, "but I am shocked! Upon my soul I am shocked. But that confounded bee-hive of ours in the city must be paramount to every other consideration, when there is honey to be made; and that is my best excuse. Here is a very singular old female dropping curtsies on my right," said Montague, breaking off in his discourse, and

looking at Mrs. Gamp, "who is not a friend of mine. Does anybody know her?"

"Ah! Well they knows me, bless their precious hearts!" said Mrs. Gamp, "not forgettin' your own merry one, sir, and long may it be so! Wishin' as every one" (she delivered this in the form of a toast or sentiment) "was as merry, and as handsome-looking, as a little bird has whispered me a certain gent is, which I will not name for fear I give offence where none is doo! My precious lady," here she stopped short in her merriment, for she had until now affected to be vastly entertained, "you're too pale by half!"

"You are here too, are you?" muttered Jonas. "Ecod, there are enough of you."

"I hope, sir," returned Mrs. Gamp, dropping an indignant curtsy, "as no bones is broke by me and Mrs. Harris a walkin' down upon a public wharf. Which was the very words she says to me (although they was the last I ever had to speak) was these: 'Sairey,' she says, 'is it a public wharf?' 'Mrs. Harris,' I makes answer, 'can you doubt it? You have know'd me, now, ma'am, eight and thirty year; and did you ever know me go, or wish to go, where I was not made welcome, say the words.' 'No, Sairey,' Mrs. Harris says, 'contrairy quite.' And well she knows it too. I am but a poor woman, but I've been sought arter, sir, though you may not think it. I've been knocked up at all hours of the night, and warned out by a many landlords, in consequence of being mistook for Fire. 'I goes out working for my bread,' 'tis true, but I maintains my independency, with your kind leave, and which I will till death. I has my feelins as a woman, sir, and I have been a mother likeways; but touch a pipkin as belongs to me, or make the least remarks on what I eats or drinks, and though you was the favouritest young, for'ard, hussy of a servant-gal as ever come into a house, either you leaves the place, or me. My earnings is not great, sir, but I will not be impoged upon. Bless the babe, and save the mother, is my mortar, sir; but I makes so free as add to that, Don't try no impogician with the Nuss, for she will not abear it!"

Mrs. Gamp concluded by drawing her shawl tightly over herself with both hands, and, as usual, referring to Mrs. Harris for full corroboration of these particulars. She had that peculiar trembling of the head, which, in ladies of her excitable nature, may be taken as a sure indication of their breaking out again very shortly; when Jonas made a timely interposition.

"As you *are* here," he said, "you had better

see to her, and take her home. I am otherwise engaged." He said nothing more; but looked at Montague, as if to give him notice that he was ready to attend him.

"I am sorry to take you away," said Montague.

Jonas gave him a sinister look, which long lived in Tom's memory, and which he often recalled afterwards.

"I am, upon my life," said Montague. "Why did you make it necessary?"

With the same dark glance as before, Jonas replied, after a moment's silence,

"The necessity is none of my making. You have brought it about yourself."

He said nothing more. He said even this as if he were bound, and in the other's power, but had a sullen and suppressed devil within him, which he could not quite resist. His very gait, as they walked away together, was like that of a fettered man; but, striving to work out at his clenched hands, knitted brows, and fast-set lips, was the same imprisoned devil still.

They got into a handsome cabriolet, which was waiting for them, and drove away.

The whole of this extraordinary scene had passed so rapidly, and the tumult which prevailed around was so unconscious of any impression from it, that, although Tom had been one of the chief actors, it was like a dream. No one had noticed him after they had left the packet. He had stood behind Jonas, and so near him, that he could not help hearing all that passed. He had stood there, with his sister on his arm, expecting and hoping to have an opportunity of explaining his strange share in this yet stranger business. But Jonas had not raised his eyes from the ground; no one else had even looked towards him; and before he could resolve on any course of action, they were all gone.

He gazed round for his landlord. But he had done that more than once already, and no such man was to be seen. He was still pursuing this search with his eyes, when he saw a hand beckoning to him from a hackney-coach; and hurrying towards it, found it was Merry's. She addressed him hurriedly, but bent out of the window, that she might not be overheard by her companion, Mrs. Gamp.

"What is it!" she said, "Good Heaven, what is it? Why did he tell me last night to prepare for a long journey, and why have you brought us back like criminals? Dear Mr. Pinch!" she clasped her hands, distractedly, "be merciful to us. Whatever this dreadful secret is, be merciful, and God will bless you!"

"If any power of mercy lay with me," cried

Tom, "trust me, you shouldn't ask in vain. But I am far more ignorant and weak than you."

She withdrew into the coach again, and he saw the hand waving towards him for a moment; but whether in reproachfulness or incredulity, or misery, or grief, or sad adieu, or what else, he could not, being so hurried, understand. *She* was gone now; and Ruth and he were left to walk away, and wonder.

Had Mr. Nadgett appointed the man who never came, to meet him upon London Bridge, that morning? He was certainly looking over the parapet, and down upon the steam-boat wharf at that moment. It could not have been for pleasure; he never took pleasure. No. He must have had some business there.

CHAPTER XLI.

MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND, ARRIVING AT A PLEASANT UNDERSTANDING, SET FORTH UPON AN ENTERPRISE.

THE office of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company being near at hand, and Mr. Montague driving Jonas straight there, they had very little way to go.

But, the journey might have been one of several hours' duration, without provoking a remark from either: for it was clear that Jonas did not mean to break the silence which prevailed between them, and that it was not, as yet, his dear friend's cue to tempt him into conversation.

He had thrown aside his cloak, as having now no motive for concealment, and with that garment huddled on his knees, sat as far removed from his companion as the limited space in such a carriage would allow. There was a striking difference in his manner, compared with what it had been, within a few minutes, when Tom encountered him so unexpectedly on board the packet, or when the ugly change had fallen on him in Mr. Montague's dressing-room. He had the aspect of a man found out, and held at bay; of being baffled, hunted, and beset; but there was now a dawning and increasing purpose in his face, which changed it very much. It was gloomy, distrustful, lowering; pale with anger, and defeat; it still was humbled, abject, cowardly, and mean; but, let the conflict go on as it would, there was one strong purpose wrestling with every emotion of his mind, and casting the whole series down as they arose.

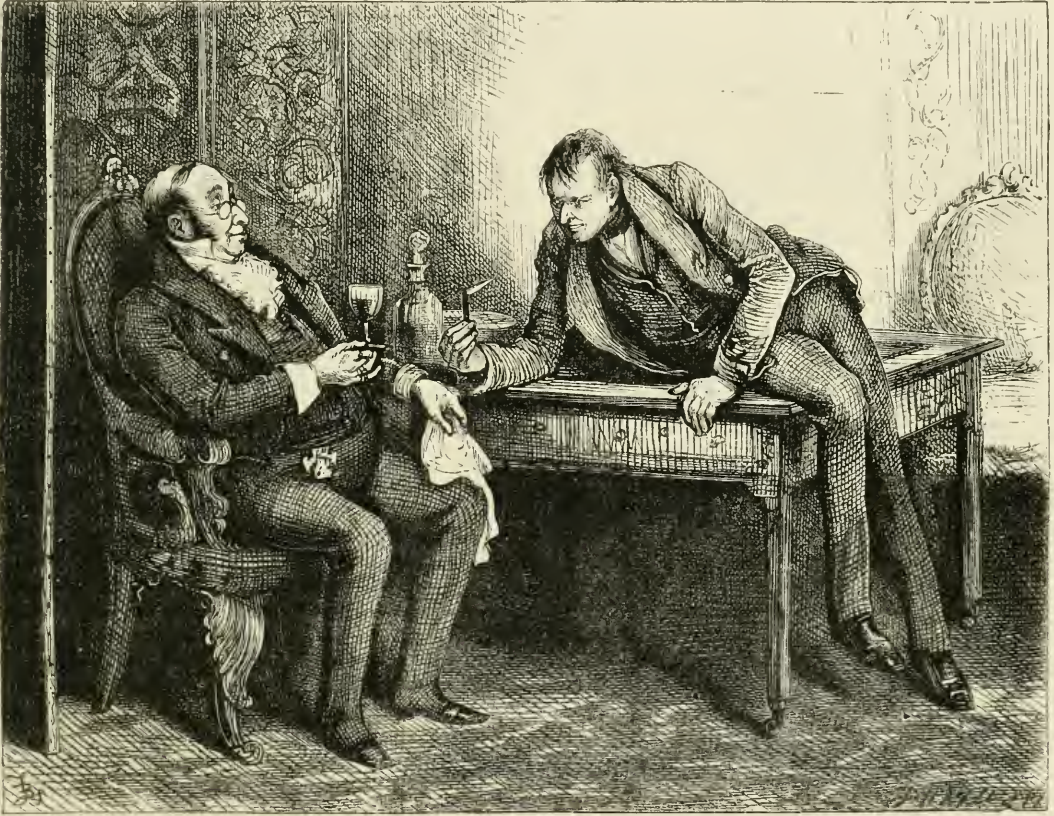
Not prepossessing in appearance, at the best

of times, it may be readily supposed that he was not so now. He had left deep marks of his front teeth in his nether lip; and those tokens of the agitation he had lately undergone, improved his looks as little as the heavy corrugations in his forehead. But he was self-possessed now; unnaturally self-possessed, indeed, as men quite otherwise than brave are known to be in desperate extremities; and when the carriage stopped, he waited for no invitation, but leaped hardly out, and went up-stairs.

The chairman followed him; and closing the board-room door as soon as they had entered, threw himself upon a sofa. Jonas stood before the window, looking down into the street; and leaned against the sash, resting his head upon his arms.

"This is not handsome, Chuzzlewit!" said Montague, at length. "Not handsome, upon my soul!"

"What would you have me do?" he answered, looking round abruptly; "what do you expect?"



"NOW, COULD YOU CUT A MAN'S THROAT WITH SUCH A THING AS THIS?" DEMANDED JONAS.

"Confidence, my good fellow. Some confidence!" said Montague, in an injured tone.

"Ecod! You show great confidence in me," retorted Jonas. "Don't you?"

"Do I not?" said his companion, raising his head, and looking at him, but he had turned again. "Do I not? Have I not confided to you the easy schemes I have formed for our advantage; *our* advantage, mind; not mine alone; and what is my return? Attempted flight!"

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"How do you know that? Who said I meant to fly?"

"Who said! Come, come. A foreign boat, my friend, an early hour, a figure wrapped up for disguise! Who said! If you didn't mean to jilt me, why were you there? If you didn't mean to jilt me, why did you come back?"

"I came back," said Jonas "to avoid disturbance."

"You were wise," rejoined his friend.

Jonas stood quite silent; still looking down

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into the street, and resting his head upon his arms.

"Now, Chuzzlewit," said Montague, "notwithstanding what has passed, I will be plain with you. Are you attending to me there? I only see your back."

"I hear you. Go on!"

"I say that notwithstanding what has passed, I will be plain with you."

"You said that before. And I have told you once, I heard you say it. Go on."

"You are a little chafed, but I can make allowances for that, and am, fortunately, myself in the very best of tempers. Now, let us see how circumstances stand. A day or two ago, I mentioned to you, my dear fellow, that I thought I had discovered——"

"Will you hold your tongue?" said Jonas, looking fiercely round, and glancing at the door.

"Well, well!" said Montague. "Judicious! Quite correct! My discoveries being published, would be like many other men's discoveries in this honest world; of no further use to me. You see, Chuzzlewit, how ingenuous and frank I am in showing you the weakness of my own position! To return. I make, or think I make, a certain discovery, which I take an early opportunity of mentioning in your ear, in that spirit of confidence which I really hoped did prevail between us, and was reciprocated by you. Perhaps there is something in it: perhaps there is nothing. I have my knowledge and opinion on the subject. You have yours. We will not discuss the question. But, my good fellow, you have been weak; what I wish to point out to you is, that you have been weak. I may desire to turn this little incident to my account (indeed, I do. I'll not deny it), but my account does not lie in probing it, or using it against you."

"What do you call using it against me?" asked Jonas, who had not yet changed his attitude.

"Oh!" said Montague, with a laugh. "We'll not enter into that."

"Using it, to make a beggar of me. Is that the use you mean?"

"No."

"Ecod," muttered Jonas, bitterly. "That's the use in which your account *does* lie. You speak the truth there."

"I wish you to venture (it's a very safe venture) a little more with us, certainly, and to keep quiet," said Montague. "You promised me you would; and you must. I say it plainly, Chuzzlewit, you *MUST*. Reason the matter. If you don't, my secret is worthless to me; and

being so, it may as well become the public property as mine: better, for I shall gain some credit, bringing it to light. I want you, besides, to act as a decoy in a case I have already told you of. You don't mind that, I know. You care nothing for the man (you care nothing for any man; you are too sharp; so am I, I hope); and could bear any loss of his, with pious fortitude. Ha, ha, ha! You have tried to escape from the first consequence. You cannot escape it, I assure you. I have shown you that, to-day. Now, I am not a moral man, you know. I am not the least in the world affected by anything you may have done; by any little indiscretion you may have committed; but I wish to profit by it, if I can; and to a man of your intelligence I make that free confession. I am not at all singular in that infirmity. Everybody profits by the indiscretion of his neighbour; and the people in the best repute, the most. Why do you give me this trouble? It must come to a friendly agreement, or an unfriendly crash. It must. If the former, you are very little hurt. If the latter—well! you know best what is likely to happen then."

Jonas left the window, and walked up close to him. He did not look him in the face; it was not his habit to do that; but he kept his eyes towards him—on his breast, or thereabouts—and was at great pains to speak slowly and distinctly, in reply. Just as a man in a state of conscious drunkenness might be.

"Lying is of no use, now," he said. "I *did* think of getting away this morning, and making better terms with you from a distance."

"To be sure! To be sure!" replied Montague. "Nothing more natural. I foresaw that, and provided against it. But I am afraid I am interrupting you."

"How the devil," pursued Jonas, with a still greater effort, "you made choice of your messenger, and where you found him, I'll not ask you. I owed him one good turn before to-day. If you are so careless of men in general, as you said you were just now, you are quite indifferent to what becomes of such a crop-tailed cur as that, and will leave me to settle my account with him in my own manner."

If he had raised his eyes to his companion's face, he would have seen that Montague was evidently unable to comprehend his meaning. But, continuing to stand before him, with his furtive gaze directed as before, and pausing here, only to moisten his dry lips with his tongue, the fact was lost upon him. It might have struck a close observer that this fixed and steady glance of Jonas's was a part of the altera-

tion which had taken place in his demeanour. He kept it riveted on one spot, with which his thoughts had manifestly nothing to do; like as a juggler walking on a cord or wire to any dangerous end, holds some object in his sight to steady him, and never wanders from it, lest he trip.

Montague was quick in his rejoinder, though he made it at a venture. There was no difference of opinion between him and his friend on *that* point. Not the least.

"Your great discovery," Jonas proceeded, with a savage sneer that got the better of him for the moment, "may be true, and may be false. Which-ever it is, I dare say I'm no worse than other men."

"Not a bit," said Tigg. "Not a bit. We're all alike—or nearly so."

"I want to know this," Jonas went on to say; "is it your own? You'll not wonder at my asking the question."

"My own!" repeated Montague.

"Aye!" returned the other, gruffly. "Is it known to anybody else? Come! Don't waver about that."

"No!" said Montague, without the smallest hesitation. "What would it be worth, do you think, unless I had the keeping of it?"

Now, for the first time, Jonas looked at him. After a pause, he put out his hand, and said, with a laugh:—

"Come! make things easy to me, and I'm yours. I don't know that I may not be better off here, after all, than if I had gone away this morning. But here I am, and here I'll stay now. Take your oath!"

He cleared his throat, for he was speaking hoarsely, and said in a lighter tone:—

"Shall I go to Pecksniff! When? Say when!"

"Immediately!" cried Montague. "He cannot be enticed too soon."

"Ecod!" cried Jonas, with a wild laugh. "There's some fun in catching that old hypocrite. I hate him. Shall I go to-night?"

"Aye! This," said Montague, ecstatically, "is like business! We understand each other now! To-night, my good fellow, by all means."

"Come with me," cried Jonas. "We must make a dash: go down in state, and carry documents, for he's a deep file to deal with, and must be drawn on with an artful hand, or he'll not follow. I know him. As I can't take your lodgings or your dinners down, I must take you. Will you come to-night?"

His friend appeared to hesitate; and neither to have anticipated this proposal, nor to relish it very much.

"We can concert our plans upon the road," said Jonas. "We must not go direct to him, but cross over from some other place, and turn out of our way to see him. I may not want to introduce you, but I must have you on the spot. I know the man, I tell you."

"But, what if the man knows me?" said Montague, shrugging his shoulders.

"He know!" cried Jonas. "Don't you run that risk with fifty men a day! Would your father know you? Did I know you? Ecod, you were another figure when I saw you first. Ha, ha, ha! I see the rents and patches now! No false hair then, no black dye! You were another sort of joker in those days, you were! You even spoke different, then. You've acted the gentleman so seriously since, that you've taken in yourself. If he should know you, what does it matter? Such a change is a proof of your success. You know that, or you would not have made yourself known to me. Will you come?"

"My good fellow," said Montague, still hesitating, "I can trust you alone."

"Trust me! Ecod, you may trust me now, far enough. I'll try to go away no more—no more!" He stopped, and added in a more sober tone, "I can't get on without you. Will you come?"

"I will," said Montague, "if that's your opinion." And they shook hands upon it.

The boisterous manner which Jonas had exhibited during the latter part of this conversation, and which had gone on rapidly increasing with almost every word he had spoken; from the time when he looked his honourable friend in the face until now; did not now subside, but, remaining at its height, abided by him. Most unusual with him at any period; most inconsistent with his temper and constitution; especially unnatural it would appear in one so darkly circumstanced; it abided by him. It was not like the effect of wine, or any ardent drink, for he was perfectly coherent. It even made him proof against the usual influence of such means of excitement; for, although he drank deeply several times that day, with no reserve or caution, he remained exactly the same man, and his spirits neither rose nor fell in the least observable degree.

Deciding, after some discussion, to travel at night, in order that the day's business might not be broken in upon, they took counsel together in reference to the means. Mr. Montague being of opinion that four horses were advisable, at all events for the first stage, as throwing a great deal of dust into people's eyes, in more senses

than one, a travelling chariot and four lay under orders for nine o'clock. Jonas did not go home: observing, that his being obliged to leave town on business in so great a hurry, would be a good excuse for having turned back so unexpectedly in the morning. So he wrote a note for his portmanteau, and sent it by a messenger, who duly brought his luggage back, with a short note from that other piece of luggage, his wife, expressive of her wish to be allowed to come and see him for a moment. To this request he sent for answer, "she had better;" and one such threatening affirmative being sufficient, in defiance of the English grammar, to express a negative, she kept away.

Mr. Montague being much engaged in the course of the day, Jonas bestowed his spirits chiefly on the doctor, with whom he lunched in the medical officer's own room. On his way thither, encountering Mr. Nadgett in the outer office, he bantered that stealthy gentleman on always appearing anxious to avoid him, and inquired if he were afraid of him. Mr. Nadgett slyly answered, "No, but he believed it must be his way, as he had been charged with much the same kind of thing before."

Mr. Montague was listening to, or, to speak with greater elegance, he overheard, this dialogue. As soon as Jonas was gone, he beckoned Nadgett to him with the feather of his pen, and whispered in his ear,

"Who gave him my letter this morning?"

"My lodger, sir," said Nadgett, behind the palm of his hand.

"How came that about?"

"I found him on the wharf, sir. Being so much hurried, and you not arrived, it was necessary to do something. It fortunately occurred to me, that if I gave it him myself, I could be of no further use. I should have been blown upon immediately."

"Mr. Nadgett, you are a jewel," said Montague, patting him on the back. "What's your lodger's name?"

"Pinch, sir. Mr. Thomas Pinch."

Montague reflected for a little while, and then asked:

"From the country, do you know?"

"From Wiltshire, sir, he told me."

They parted without another word. To see Mr. Nadgett's bow when Montague and he next met, and to see Mr. Montague acknowledge it, anybody might have undertaken to swear that they had never spoken to each other confidentially, in all their lives.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Jonas and the doctor made themselves very comfortable up-stairs,

over a bottle of the old Madeira, and some sandwiches; for the doctor having been already invited to dine below, at six o'clock, preferred a light repast for lunch. It was advisable, he said, in two points of view: First, as being healthy in itself. Secondly, as being the better preparation for dinner.

"And you are bound for all our sakes to take particular care of your digestion, Mr. Chuzzlewit, my dear sir," said the doctor, smacking his lips after a glass of wine; "for depend upon it, it is worth preserving. It must be in admirable condition, sir; perfect chronometer-work. Otherwise your spirits could not be so remarkable. Your bosom's lord sits lightly on its throne, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as what's-his-name says in the play. I wish he said it in a play which did anything like common justice to our profession, by-the-bye. There is an apothecary in that drama, sir, which is a low thing; vulgar, sir; out of nature altogether."

Mr. Jobling pulled out his shirt-frill of fine linen, as though he would have added, "This is what I call nature in a medical man, sir;" and looked at Jonas for an observation.

Jonas not being in a condition to pursue the subject, took up a case of lancets that was lying on the table, and opened it.

"Ah!" said the doctor, leaning back in his chair, "I always take 'em out of my pocket before I eat. My pockets are rather tight. Ha, ha, ha!"

Jonas had opened one of the shining little instruments; and was scrutinising it with a look as sharp and eager as its own bright edge.

"Good steel, doctor. Good steel! Eh?"

"Ye-es," replied the doctor, with the faltering modesty of ownership. "One might open a vein pretty dexterously with that, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"It has opened a good many in its time, I suppose?" said Jonas, looking at it with a growing interest.

"Not a few, my dear sir, not a few. It has been engaged in a—in a pretty good practice, I believe I may say," replied the doctor, coughing as if the matter-of-fact were so very dry and literal that he couldn't help it. "In a pretty good practice," repeated the doctor, putting another glass of wine to his lips.

"Now, could you cut a man's throat with such a thing as this?" demanded Jonas.

"Oh certainly, certainly, if you took him in the right place," returned the doctor. "It all depends upon that."

"Where you have your hand now, hey?" cried Jonas bending forward to look at it.

"Yes," said the doctor; "that's the jugular."

Jonas, in his vivacity, made a sudden sawing in the air, so close behind the doctor's jugular, that he turned quite red. Then Jonas (in the same strange spirit of vivacity) burst into a loud discordant laugh.

"No, no," said the doctor, shaking his head: "edge tools, edge tools; never play with 'em. A very remarkable instance of the skilful use of edge tools, by the way, occurs to me at this moment. It was a case of murder. I am afraid it was a case of murder, committed by a member of our profession; it was so artistically done."

"Aye!" said Jonas. "How was that?"

"Why, sir," returned Jobling, "the thing lies in a nut-shell. A certain gentleman was found, one morning, in an obscure street, lying in an angle of a doorway—I should rather say, leaning, in an upright position, in the angle of a doorway, and supported consequently *by* the doorway. Upon his waistcoat there was one solitary drop of blood. He was dead, and cold; and had been murdered, sir."

"Only one drop of blood!" said Jonas.

"Sir, that man," replied the doctor, "had been stabbed to the heart. Had been stabbed to the heart with such dexterity, sir, that he had died instantly, and had bled internally. It was supposed that a medical friend of his (to whom suspicion attached) had engaged him in conversation on some pretence; had taken him, very likely by the button, in a conversational manner; had examined his ground, at leisure, with his other hand; had marked the exact spot; drawn out the instrument, whatever it was, when he was quite prepared; and——"

"And done the trick," suggested Jonas.

"Exactly so," replied the doctor. "It was quite an operation in its way, and very neat. The medical friend never turned up; and, as I tell you, he had the credit of it. Whether he did it or not, I can't say. But, having had the honour to be called in with two or three of my professional brethren on the occasion, and having assisted to make a careful examination of the wound, I have no hesitation in saying that it would have reflected credit on any medical man; and that in an unprofessional person, it could not but be considered, either as an extraordinary work of art, or the result of a still more extraordinary, happy, and favourable conjunction of circumstances."

His hearer was so much interested in this case, that the doctor went on to elucidate it with the assistance of his own finger and thumb and waistcoat; and at Jonas's request, he took

the further trouble of going into a corner of the room, and alternately representing the murdered man and the murderer; which he did with great effect. The bottle being emptied, and the story done, Jonas was in precisely the same boisterous and unusual state as when they had sat down. If, as Jobling theorised, his good digestion were the cause, he must have been a very ostrich.

At dinner, it was just the same; and after dinner too; though wine was drunk in abundance, and various rich meats eaten. At nine o'clock it was still the same. There being a lamp in the carriage, he swore they would take a pack of cards, and a bottle of wine: and with these things under his cloak, went down to the door.

"Out of the way, Tom Thumb, and get to bed!"

This was the salutation he bestowed on Mr. Bailey, who, booted and wrapped up, stood at the carriage-door to help him in.

"To bed, sir! I'm a going, too," said Bailey.

He alighted quickly, and walked back into the hall, where Montague was lighting a cigar: conducting Mr. Bailey with him, by the collar.

"You are not a going to take this monkey of a boy, are you?"

"Yes," said Montague.

He gave the boy a shake, and threw him roughly aside. There was more of his familiar self in the action than in anything he had done that day; but he broke out laughing immediately afterwards, and making a thrust at the doctor with his hand, in imitation of his representation of the medical friend, went out to the carriage again, and took his seat. His companion followed immediately. Mr. Bailey climbed into the rumble.

"It will be a stormy night!" exclaimed the doctor, as they started.

CHAPTER XLII.

CONTINUATION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.



HE Doctor's prognostication in reference to the weather, was speedily verified. Although the weather was not a patient of his, and no third party had required him to give an opinion on the case, the quick fulfilment of his prophecy may be taken as an instance of his professional tact; for, unless the threatening aspect of the night had been perfectly plain and unmistakable,

Mr. Jobling would never have compromised his reputation by delivering any sentiments on the subject. He used this principle in Medicine with too much success, to be unmindful of it in his commonest transactions.

It was one of those hot, silent nights, when people sit at windows, listening for the thunder which they know will shortly break; when they recall dismal tales of hurricanes and earthquakes; and of lonely travellers on open plains, and lonely ships at sea struck by lightning. Lightning flashed and quivered on the black horizon even now; and hollow murmurings were in the wind, as though it had been blowing where the thunder rolled, and still was charged with its exhausted echoes. But the storm, though gathering swiftly, had not yet come up; and the prevailing stillness was the more solemn, from the dull intelligence that seemed to hover in the air, of noise and conflict afar off.

It was very dark; but in the murky sky there were masses of cloud which shone with a lurid light, like monstrous heaps of copper that had been heated in a furnace, and were growing cold. These had been advancing steadily and slowly, but they were now motionless, or nearly so. As the carriage clattered round the corners of the streets, it passed, at every one, a knot of persons, who had come there—many from their houses close at hand, without hats—to look up at that quarter of the sky. And now, a very few large drops of rain began to fall, and thunder rumbled in the distance.

Jonas sat in a corner of the carriage, with his bottle resting on his knee, and gripped as tightly in his hand, as if he would have ground its neck to powder if he could. Instinctively attracted by the night, he had laid aside the pack of cards upon the cushion; and with the same involuntary impulse, so intelligible to both of them as not to occasion a remark on either side, his companion had extinguished the lamp. The front glasses were down; and they sat looking silently out upon the gloomy scene before them.

They were clear of London, or as clear of it as travellers can be, whose way lies on the Western Road, within a stage of that enormous city. Occasionally, they encountered a foot-passenger, hurrying to the nearest place of shelter; or some unwieldy cart proceeding onward at a heavy trot, with the same end in view. Little clusters of such vehicles were gathered round the stable-yard or baiting-place of every way-side tavern; while their drivers watched the weather from the doors and open windows, or made merry within. Everywhere,

the people were disposed to bear each other company, rather than sit alone; so that groups of watchful faces seemed to be looking out upon the night *and them*, from almost every house they passed.

It may appear strange that this should have disturbed Jonas, or rendered him uneasy: but it did. After muttering to himself, and often changing his position, he drew up the blind on his side of the carriage, and turned his shoulder sulkily towards it. But he neither looked at his companion nor broke the silence which prevailed between them, and which had fallen so suddenly upon himself, by addressing a word to him.

The thunder rolled, the lightning flashed; the rain poured down, like Heaven's wrath. Surrounded at one moment by intolerable light, and at the next by pitchy darkness, they still pressed forward on their journey. Even when they arrived at the end of the stage, and might have tarried, they did not; but ordered horses out, immediately. Nor had this any reference to some five minutes' lull, which at that time seemed to promise a cessation of the storm. They held their course as if they were impelled and driven by its fury. Although they had not exchanged a dozen words, and might have tarried very well, they seemed to feel, by joint consent, that onward they must go.

Louder and louder the deep thunder rolled, as through the myriad halls of some vast temple in the sky; fiercer and brighter became the lightning; more and more heavily the rain poured down. The horses (they were travelling now with a single pair) plunged and started from the rills of quivering fire that seemed to wind along the ground before them: but there these two men sat, and forward they went as if they were led on by an invisible attraction.

The eye, partaking of the quickness of the flashing light, saw in its every gleam a multitude of objects which it could not see at steady noon in fifty times that period. Bells in steeples, with the rope and wheel that moved them; ragged nests of birds in cornices and nooks; faces full of consternation in the tilted waggons that came tearing past: their frightened teams ringing out a warning which the thunder drowned; harrows and ploughs left out in fields; miles upon miles of hedge-divided country, with the distant fringe of trees as obvious as the scarecrow in the bean-field close at hand; in a trembling, vivid, flickering instant, everything was clear and plain: then came a flush of red into the yellow light; a change to blue; a brightness so intense that there was nothing

else but light; and then the deepest and profoundest darkness.

The lightning being very crooked and very dazzling, may have presented or assisted a curious optical illusion, which suddenly rose before the startled eyes of Montague in the carriage, and as rapidly disappeared. He thought he saw Jonas with his hand lifted, and the bottle clenched in it like a hammer, making as if he would aim a blow at his head. At the same time he observed (or so believed), an expression in his face: a combination of the unnatural excitement he had shown all day, with a wild hatred and fear: which might have rendered a wolf a less terrible companion.

He uttered an involuntary exclamation, and called to the driver, who brought his horses to a stop with all speed.

It could hardly have been as he supposed, for although he had not taken his eyes off his companion, and had not seen him move, he sat reclining in his corner as before.

"What's the matter?" said Jonas. "Is that your general way of waking out of your sleep?"

"I could swear," returned the other, "that I have not closed my eyes!"

"When you have sworn it," said Jonas, composedly, "we had better go on again, if you have only stopped for that."

He uncorked the bottle with the help of his teeth: and putting it to his lips, took a long draught.

"I wish we had never started on this journey. This is not," said Montague, recoiling instinctively, and speaking in a voice that betrayed his agitation: "this is not a night to travel in."

"Ecod! you're right there," returned Jonas: "and we shouldn't be out in it but for you. If you hadn't kept me waiting all day, we might have been at Salisbury by this time; snug abed and fast asleep. What are we stopping for?"

His companion put his head out of window for a moment, and drawing it in again, observed (as if that were his cause of anxiety), that the boy was drenched to the skin.

"Serve him right," said Jonas. "I'm glad of it. What the devil are we stopping for? Are you going to spread him out to dry?"

"I have half a mind to take him inside," observed the other with some hesitation.

"Oh! thankee!" said Jonas. "We don't want any damp boys here: especially a young imp like him. Let him be where he is. He ain't afraid of a little thunder and lightning, I dare say; whoever else is. Go on, driver! We had better have *him* inside perhaps," he muttered with a laugh; "and the horses."

"Don't go too fast," cried Montague to the postillion; "and take care how you go. You were nearly in the ditch when I called to you."

This was not true; and Jonas bluntly said so, as they moved forward again. Montague took little or no heed of what he said, but repeated that it was not a night for travelling, and showed himself, both then and afterwards, unusually anxious.

From this time, Jonas recovered his former spirits, if such a term may be employed to express the state in which he had left the city. He had his bottle often at his mouth; roared out snatches of songs, without the least regard to time or tune or voice, or anything but loud discordance; and urged his silent friend to be merry with him.

"You're the best company in the world, my good fellow," said Montague with an effort, "and in general irresistible; but to-night—do you hear it?"

"Ecod, I hear and see it too," cried Jonas, shading his eyes, for the moment, from the lightning which was flashing, not in any one direction, but all around them. "What of that? It don't change you, nor me, nor our affairs. Chorus, chorus!"

It may lighten and storm,
Till it hunt the red worm
From the grass where the gibbet is driven;
But it can't hurt the dead,
And it won't save the head
That is doom'd to be rifled and riven.

That must be a precious old song," he added with an oath, as he stopped short in a kind of wonder at himself. "I haven't heard it since I was a boy, and how it comes into my head now, unless the lightning put it there, I don't know. 'Can't hurt the dead'! No no. 'And won't save the head'! No no. No! Ha ha ha!"

His mirth was of such a savage and extraordinary character, and was, in an inexplicable way, at once so suited to the night, and yet such a coarse intrusion on its terrors, that his fellow-traveller, always a coward, shrunk from him in positive fear. Instead of Jonas being his tool and instrument, their places seemed to be reversed. But there was reason for this too, Montague thought; since the sense of his debasement might naturally inspire such a man with the wish to assert a noisy independence, and in that licence to forget his real condition. Being quick enough, in reference to such subjects of contemplation, he was not long in taking this argument into account, and giving it its full weight. But, still, he felt a vague sense of alarm, and was depressed and uneasy.

He was certain he had not been asleep; but his eyes might have deceived him; for, looking at Jonas now, in any interval of darkness, he could represent his figure to himself in any attitude his state of mind suggested. On the other hand, he knew full well that Jonas had no reason to love him; and even taking the piece of pantomime which had so impressed his mind to be a real gesture, and not the working of his fancy, the most that could be said of it, was, that it was quite in keeping with the rest of his diabolical fun, and had the same impotent expression of truth in it. "If he could kill me with a wish," thought the swindler, "I should not live long."

He resolved, that when he should have had his use of Jonas, he would restrain him with an iron curb: in the mean time, that he could not do better than leave him to take his own way, and preserve his own peculiar description of good-humour, after his own uncommon manner. It was no great sacrifice to bear with him; "for when all is got that can be got," thought Montague, "I shall decamp across the water, and have the laugh on my side—and the gains."

Such were his reflections from hour to hour; his state of mind being one in which the same thoughts constantly present themselves over and over again in wearisome repetition; while Jonas, who appeared to have dismissed reflection altogether, entertained himself as before. They agreed that they would go to Salisbury, and would cross to Mr. Pecksniff's in the morning; and at the prospect of deluding that worthy gentleman, the spirits of his amiable son-in-law became more boisterous than ever.

As the night wore on, the thunder died away, but still rolled gloomily and mournfully in the distance. The lightning too, though now comparatively harmless, was yet bright and frequent. The rain was quite as violent as it had ever been.

It was their ill-fortune, at about the time of dawn and in the last stage of their journey, to have a restive pair of horses. These animals had been greatly terrified in their stable by the tempest; and coming out into the dreary interval between night and morning, when the glare of the lightning was yet unsubdued by day, and the various objects in their view were presented in indistinct and exaggerated shapes which they would not have worn by night, they gradually became less and less capable of control; until, taking a sudden fright at something by the roadside, they dashed off wildly down a steep hill, flung the driver from his saddle, drew the carriage to the brink of a ditch, stumbled headlong down, and threw it crashing over.

The travellers had opened the carriage door, and had either jumped or fallen out. Jonas was the first to stagger to his feet. He felt sick, and weak, and very giddy, and reeling to a five-barred gate, stood holding by it: looking drowsily about, as the whole landscape swam before his eyes. But, by degrees, he grew more conscious, and presently observed that Montague was lying senseless in the road, within a few feet of the horses.

In an instant, as if his own faint body were suddenly animated by a demon, he ran to the horses' heads; and pulling at their bridles with all his force, set them struggling and plunging with such mad violence as brought their hoofs at every effort nearer to the skull of the prostrate man, and must have led in half a minute to his brains being dashed out on the highway.

As he did this, he fought and contended with them like a man possessed: making them wilder by his cries.

"Whoop!" cried Jonas. "Whoop! again! another! A little more, a little more! Up, ye devils! Hillo!"

As he heard the driver, who had risen and was hurrying up, crying to him to desist, his violence increased.

"Hillo! Hillo!" cried Jonas.

"For God's sake," cried the driver.—"The gentleman—in the road—he'll be killed!"

The same shouts and the same struggles were his only answer. But the man darting in at the peril of his own life, saved Montague's, by dragging him through the mire and water out of the reach of present harm. That done, he ran to Jonas; and with the aid of his knife they very shortly disengaged the horses from the broken chariot, and got them, cut and bleeding, on their legs again. The postillion and Jonas had now leisure to look at each other, which they had not had yet.

"Presence of mind, presence of mind!" cried Jonas, throwing up his hands wildly. "What would you have done without me!"

"The other gentleman would have done badly without *me*," returned the man, shaking his head. "You should have moved him first. I gave him up for dead."

"Presence of mind, you croaker, presence of mind!" cried Jonas, with a harsh loud laugh. "Was he struck, do you think?"

They both turned to look at him. Jonas muttered something to himself, when he saw him sitting up beneath the hedge, looking vacantly round.

"What's the matter?" asked Montague. "Is anybody hurt?"

"Ecod!" said Jonas, "it don't seem so. There are no bones broke, after all."

They raised him, and he tried to walk. He was a good deal shaken, and trembled very much. But with the exception of a few cuts and bruises this was all the damage he had sustained.

"Cuts and bruises, eh?" said Jonas. "We've all got them. Only cuts and bruises, eh?"

"I wouldn't have given sixpence for the gentleman's head in half a dozen seconds more, for all he's only cut and bruised," observed the post-boy. "If ever you're in an accident of

this sort again, sir; which I hope you won't be; never you pull at the bridle of a horse that's down, when there's a man's head in the way. That can't be done twice without there being a dead man in the case; it would have ended in that, this time, as sure as ever you were born, if I hadn't come up just when I did."

Jonas replied by advising him with a curse to hold his tongue, and to go somewhere, whither he was not very likely to go of his own accord. But Montague, who had listened eagerly to every word, himself diverted the subject, by exclaiming: "Where's the boy!"



"AWOKE TO FIND JONAS STANDING AT HIS BEDSIDE WATCHING HIM. AND THAT VERY DOOR WIDE OPEN."

"Ecod, I forgot that monkey," said Jonas. "What's become of him!" A very brief search settled that question. The unfortunate Mr. Bailey had been thrown sheer over the hedge or the five-barred gate; and was lying in the neighbouring field, to all appearance dead.

"When I said to-night, that I wished I had never started on this journey," cried his master, "I knew it was an ill-fated one. Look at this boy!"

"Is that all?" growled Jonas. "If you call that a sign of it—"

"Why, what should I call a sign of it?" asked Montague, hurriedly. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Jonas, stooping down over the body, "that I never heard you were his father, or had any particular reason to care much about him. Halloa. Hold up here!"

But the boy was past holding up, or being held up, or giving any other sign of life, than a faint and fitful beating of the heart. After some discussion, the driver mounted the horse which had been least injured, and took the lad in his

arms, as well as he could; while Montague and Jonas leading the other horse, and carrying a trunk between them, walked by his side towards Salisbury.

"You'd get there in a few minutes, and be able to send assistance to meet us, if you went forward, post-boy," said Jonas. "Trot on!"

"No, no," cried Montague; "we'll keep together."

"Why, what a chicken you are! You are not afraid of being robbed; are you?" said Jonas.

"I am not afraid of anything," replied the other, whose looks and manner were in flat contradiction to his words. "But we'll keep together."

"You were mighty anxious about the boy, a minute ago," said Jonas. "I suppose you know that he may die in the mean time?"

"Aye, aye. I know. But we'll keep together."

As it was clear that he was not to be moved from this determination, Jonas made no other rejoinder than such as his face expressed; and they proceeded in company. They had three or four good miles to travel; and the way was not made easier by the state of the road, the burden by which they were embarrassed, or their own stiff and sore condition. After a sufficiently long and painful walk, they arrived at the Inn; and having knocked the people up (it being yet very early in the morning), sent out messengers to see to the carriage and its contents, and roused a surgeon from his bed to tend the chief sufferer. All the service he could render, he rendered promptly and skilfully. But he gave it as his opinion that the boy was labouring under a severe concussion of the brain, and that Mr. Bailey's mortal course was run.

If Montague's strong interest in the announcement could have been considered as unselfish, in any degree, it might have been a redeeming trait in a character that had no such lineaments to spare. But it was not difficult to see that, for some unexpressed reason best appreciated by himself, he attached a strange value to the company and presence of this mere child. When, after receiving some assistance from the surgeon himself, he retired to the bed-room prepared for him, and it was broad day, his mind was still dwelling on this theme.

"I would rather have lost," he said, "a thousand pounds than lost the boy just now. But I'll return home alone. I am resolved upon that. Chuzzlewit shall go forward first, and I will follow in my own time. I'll have no more

of this," he added, wiping his damp forehead. "Twenty-four hours of this would turn my hair grey!"

After examining his chamber, and looking under the bed, and in the cupboards, and even behind the curtains, with unusual caution (although it was, as has been said, broad day) he double-locked the door by which he had entered, and retired to rest. There was another door in the room, but it was locked on the outer side; and with what place it communicated, he knew not.

His fears or evil conscience reproduced this door in all his dreams. He dreamed that a dreadful secret was connected with it: a secret which he knew, and yet did not know, for although he was heavily responsible for it, and a party to it, he was harassed even in his vision by a distracting uncertainty in reference to its import. Incoherently entwined with this dream was another, which represented it as the hiding-place of an enemy, a shadow, a phantom; and made it the business of his life to keep the terrible creature closed up, and prevent it from forcing its way in upon him. With this view Nadgett, and he, and a strange man with a bloody smear upon his head (who told him that he had been his playfellow, and told him, too, the real name of an old schoolmate, forgotten until then), worked with iron plates and nails to make the door secure; but though they worked never so hard, it was all in vain, for the nails broke, or changed to soft twigs, or what was worse, to worms, between their fingers; the wood of the door splintered and crumbled, so that even nails would not remain in it; and the iron plates curled up like hot paper. All this time the creature on the other side—whether it was in the shape of man, or beast, he neither knew nor sought to know—was gaining on them. But his greatest terror was when the man with the bloody smear upon his head demanded of him if he knew this creature's name, and said that he would whisper it. At this the dreamer fell upon his knees, his whole blood thrilling with inexplicable fear, and held his ears. But looking at the speaker's lips, he saw that they formed the utterance of the letter "J;" and crying out aloud that the secret was discovered, and they were all lost, he awoke.

Awoke to find Jonas standing at his bedside watching him. And that very door wide open.

As their eyes met, Jonas retreated a few paces, and Montague sprang out of bed.

"Heyday!" said Jonas. "You're all alive this morning."

"Alive!" the other stammered, as he pulled

the bell-rope violently: "What are you doing here?"

"It's your room to be sure," said Jonas; "but I'm almost inclined to ask you what *you* are doing here? My room is on the other side of that door. No one told me last night not to open it. I thought it led into a passage, and was coming out to order breakfast. There's—there's no bell in my room."

Montague had in the mean time admitted the man with his hot water and boots, who hearing this, said, yes, there was; and passed into the adjoining room to point it out, at the head of the bed.

"I couldn't find it, then," said Jonas: "it's all the same. Shall I order breakfast?"

Montague answered in the affirmative. When Jonas had retired, whistling, through his own room, he opened the door of communication, to take out the key and fasten it on the inner side. But it was taken out already.

He dragged a table against the door and sat down to collect himself, as if his dreams still had some influence upon his mind.

"An evil journey," he repeated several times: "An evil journey. But I'll travel home alone. I'll have no more of this!"

His presentiment, or superstition, that it was an evil journey, did not at all deter him from doing the evil for which the journey was undertaken. With this in view, he dressed himself more carefully than usual to make a favourable impression on Mr. Pecksniff: and, reassured by his own appearance, the beauty of the morning, and the flashing of the wet boughs outside his window in the merry sunshine, was soon sufficiently inspirited to swear a few round oaths, and hum the *rag-end* of a song.

But he still muttered to himself at intervals, for all that: "I'll travel home alone!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

HAS AN INFLUENCE ON THE FORTUNES OF SEVERAL PEOPLE. MR. PECKSNIFF IS EXHIBITED IN THE PLENITUDE OF POWER; AND WIELDS THE SAME WITH FORTITUDE AND MAGNANIMITY.



On the night of the storm, Mrs. Lupin, hostess of the Blue Dragon, sat by herself in her little bar. Her solitary condition, or the bad weather, or both united, made Mrs. Lupin thoughtful, not to say sorrowful. As she sat with her chin upon her hand, looking out through a low back lattice, rendered dim in the brightest day-time by

clustering vine-leaves, she shook her head very often, and said, "Dear me! Ah, dear, dear me!"

It was a melancholy time, even in the snugness of the Dragon bar. The rich expanse of corn-field, pasture-land, green slope, and gentle undulation, with its sparkling brooks, its many hedgerows, and its clumps of beautiful trees, was black and dreary, from the diamond panes of the lattice away to the far horizon, where the thunder seemed to roll along the hills. The heavy rain beat down the tender branches of vine and jessamine, and trampled on them in its fury; and when the lightning gleamed, it showed the tearful leaves shivering and cowering together at the window, and tapping at it urgently, as if beseeching to be sheltered from the dismal night.

As a mark of her respect for the lightning, Mrs. Lupin had removed her candle to the chimney-piece. Her basket of needlework stood unheeded at her elbow; her supper, spread on a round table not far off, was untasted; and the knives had been removed for fear of attraction. She had sat for a long time with her chin upon her hand, saying to herself at intervals, "Dear me! Ah, dear, dear me!"

She was on the eve of saying so, once more, when the latch of the house-door (closed to keep the rain out), rattled on its well-worn catch, and a traveller came in, who, shutting it after him, and walking straight up to the half-door of the bar, said, rather gruffly:

"A pint of the best old beer here."

He had some reason to be gruff, for if he had passed the day in a waterfall, he could scarcely have been wetter than he was. He was wrapped up to the eyes in a rough blue sailor's coat, and had an oil-skin hat on, from the capacious brim of which, the rain fell trickling down upon his breast, and back, and shoulders. Judging from a certain liveliness of chin—he had so pulled down his hat, and pulled up his collar to defend himself from the weather, that she could only see his chin, and even across that he drew the wet sleeve of his shaggy coat, as she looked at him—Mrs. Lupin set him down for a good-natured fellow, too.

"A bad night!" observed the hostess cheerfully.

The traveller shook himself like a Newfoundland dog, and said it was, rather.

"There's a fire in the kitchen," said Mrs. Lupin, "and very good company there. Hadn't you better go and dry yourself?"

"No, thankee," said the man, glancing towards the kitchen as he spoke: he seemed to know the way.

"It's enough to give you your death of cold," observed the hostess.

"I don't take my death easy," returned the traveller; "or I should most likely have took it afore to-night. Your health, ma'am!"

Mrs. Lupin thanked him; but in the act of lifting the tankard to his mouth, he changed his mind, and put it down again. Throwing his body back, and looking about him stiffly, as a man does who is wrapped up, and has his hat low down over his eyes, he said,

"What do you call this house? Not the Dragon, do you?"

Mrs. Lupin complacently made answer, "Yes, the Dragon."

"Why, then, you've got a sort of relation of mine here, ma'am," said the traveller: "a young man of the name of Tapley. What! Mark my boy!" apostrophising the premises, "have I come upon you at last, old buck!"

This was touching Mrs. Lupin on a tender point. She turned to trim the candle on the chimney-piece, and said, with her back towards the traveller:

"Nobody should be made more welcome at the Dragon, master, than any one who brought me news of Mark. But it's many and many a long day and month since he left here and England. And whether he's alive or dead, poor fellow, Heaven above us only knows!"

She shook her head, and her voice trembled; her hand must have done so too, for the light required a deal of trimming.

"Where did he go, ma'am?" asked the traveller, in a gentler voice.

"He went," said Mrs. Lupin, with increased distress, "to America. He was always tender-hearted and kind, and perhaps at this moment may be lying in prison under sentence of death, for taking pity on some miserable black, and helping the poor runaway creetur to escape. How could he ever go to America! Why didn't he go to some of those countries where the savages eat each other fairly, and give an equal chance to every one!"

Quite subdued by this time, Mrs. Lupin sobbed, and was retiring to a chair to give her grief free vent, when the traveller caught her in his arms, and she uttered a glad cry of recognition.

"Yes, I will!" cried Mark, "another—one more—twenty more! You didn't know me in that hat and coat? I thought you would have known me anywheres! Ten more!"

"So I should have known you, if I could have seen you; but I couldn't, and you spoke so gruff. I didn't think you could speak gruff to me, Mark, at first coming back."

"Fifteen more!" said Mr. Tapley. "How handsome and how young you look! Six more! The last half-dozen warn't a fair one, and must be done over again. Lord bless you, what a treat it is to see you! One more! Well I never was so jolly. Just a few more, on account of there not being any credit in it!"

When Mr. Tapley stopped in these calculations in simple addition, he did it, not because he was at all tired of the exercise, but because he was out of breath. The pause reminded him of other duties.

"Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit's outside," he said. "I left him under the cartshed, while I came on to see if there was anybody here. We want to keep quiet to-night, till we know the news from you, and what it's best for us to do."

"There's not a soul in the house except the kitchen company," returned the hostess. "If they were to know you had come back, Mark, they'd have a bonfire in the street, late as it is."

"But they mustn't know it to-night, my precious soul," said Mark: "so have the house shut, and the kitchen fire made up; and when it's all ready, put a light in the winder, and we'll come in. One more! I long to hear about old friends. You'll tell me all about 'em, won't you: Mr. Pinch, and the butcher's dog down the street, and the terrier over the way, and the wheelwright's, and every one of 'em. When I first caught sight of the church to-night, I thought the steeple would have choked me, I did. One more! Won't you? Not a very little one to finish off with?"

"You have had plenty, I am sure," said the hostess. "Go along with your foreign manners!"

"That ain't foreign, bless you!" cried Mark. "Native as oysters, that is! One more, because it's native! As a mark of respect for the land we live in! This don't count as between you and me, you understand," said Mr. Tapley. "I ain't a kissin' you now, you'll observe. I have been among the patriots: I'm a kissin' my country."

It would have been very unreasonable to complain of the exhibition of his patriotism with which he followed up this explanation, that it was all lukewarm or indifferent. When he had given full expression to his nationality, he hurried off to Martin; while Mrs. Lupin, in a state of great agitation and excitement, prepared for their reception.

The company soon came tumbling out: insisting to each other that the Dragon clock was half an hour too fast, and that the thunder must have affected it. Impatient, wet, and weary, though they were, Martin and Mark were over-

joyed to see these old faces, and watched them with delighted interest as they departed from the house, and passed close by them.

"There's the old tailor, Mark!" whispered Martin.

"There he goes, sir! A little bandier than he was, I think, sir, ain't he? His figure's so far altered, as it seems to me, that you might wheel a rather larger barrow between his legs as he walks, than you could have done conveniently, when we know'd him. There's Sam a coming out, sir."

"Ah, to be sure!" cried Martin: "Sam, the hostler. I wonder whether the horse of Pecksniff's is alive still?"

"Not a doubt on it, sir," returned Mark. "That's a description of animal, sir, as will go on in a bony way peculiar to himself for a long time, and get into the newspapers at last under the title of 'Sing'lar Tenacity of Life in a Quadruped.' As if he had ever been alive in all his life, worth mentioning! There's the clerk, sir,—wery drunk, as usual."

"I see him!" said Martin, laughing. "But, my life, how wet you are, Mark!"

"I am! What do you consider yourself, sir?"

"Oh, not half as bad," said his fellow-traveller, with an air of great vexation. "I told you not to keep on the windy side, Mark, but to let us change and change about. The rain has been beating on you, ever since it began."

"You don't know how it pleases me, sir," said Mark, after a short silence: "if I may make so bold as say so, to hear you a going on in that there uncommon considerate way of yours; which I don't mean to attend to, never, but which, ever since that time when I was flooded in Eden, you have showed."

"Ah, Mark!" sighed Martin, "the less we say of that the better. Do I see the light yonder?"

"That's the light!" cried Mark. "Lord bless her, what briskness she possesses! Now for it, sir. Neat wines, good beds, and first-rate entertainment for man or beast."

The kitchen fire burnt clear and red, the table was spread out, the kettle boiled; the slippers were there, the boot-jack too, sheets of ham were there, cooking on the gridiron; half-a-dozen eggs were there, poaching in the frying-pan; a plethoric cherry-brandy bottle was there, winking at a foaming jug of beer upon the table; rare provisions were there, dangling from the rafters as if you had only to open your mouth, and something exquisitely ripe and good would be but too glad of the excuse for tumbling into it.

Mrs. Lupin, who for their sakes had dislodged the very cook, high priestess of the temple, with her own genial hands was dressing their repast.

It was impossible to help it—a ghost must have hugged her. The Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea being, in that respect, all one, Martin hugged her instantly. Mr. Tapley (as if the idea were quite novel, and had never occurred to him before,) followed, with much gravity, on the same side.

"Little did I ever think," said Mrs. Lupin, adjusting her cap and laughing heartily; yes, and blushing, too; "often as I have said that Mr. Pecksniff's young gentlemen were the life and soul of the Dragon, and that without them it would be too dull to live in—little did I ever think, I am sure, that any one of them would ever make so free as you, Mr. Martin! And still less that I shouldn't be angry with him, but should be glad with all my heart, to be the first to welcome him home from America, with Mark Tapley for his—"

"For his friend, Mrs. Lupin," interposed Martin.

"For his friend," said the hostess, evidently gratified by this distinction, but at the same time admonishing Mr. Tapley with a fork, to remain at a respectful distance. "Little did I ever think that! But still less, that I should ever have the changes to relate that I shall have to tell you of, when you have done your supper!"

"Good Heaven!" cried Martin, changing colour, "what changes?"

"*Sic*," said the hostess, "is quite well, and now at Mr. Pecksniff's. Don't be at all alarmed about her. She is everything you could wish. It's of no use mincing matters or making secrets, is it?" added Mrs. Lupin. "I know all about it, you see!"

"My good creature," returned Martin, "you are exactly the person who ought to know all about it. I am delighted to think you *do* know all about it. But what changes do you hint at? Has any death occurred?"

"No, no!" said the hostess. "Not so bad as that. But I declare now that I will not be drawn into saying another word till you have had your supper. If you ask me fifty questions in the mean time, I won't answer one."

She was so positive, that there was nothing for it but to get the supper over as quickly as possible; and as they had been walking a great many miles, and had fasted since the middle of the day, they did no great violence to their own inclinations in falling on it tooth and nail. It took rather longer to get through than might

have been expected; for, half a dozen times, when they thought they had finished, Mrs. Lupin exposed the fallacy of that impression triumphantly. But at last, in the course of time and nature, they gave in. Then, sitting with their slippers stretched out upon the kitchen hearth (which was wonderfully comforting, for the night had grown by this time raw and chilly), and looking with involuntary admiration at their dimpled, buxom, blooming hostess, as the firelight sparkled in her eyes and glimmered in her raven hair, they composed themselves to listen to her news.

Many were the exclamations of surprise which interrupted her, when she told them of the separation between Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters, and between the same good gentleman and Mr. Pinch. But these were nothing to the indignant demonstrations of Martin, when she related, as the common talk of the neighbourhood, what entire possession he had obtained over the mind and person of old Mr. Chuzzlewit, and what high honour he designed for Mary. On receipt of this intelligence, Martin's slippers flew off in a twinkling, and he began pulling on his wet boots with that indefinite intention of going somewhere instantly, and doing something to somebody, which is the first safety-valve of a hot temper.

"He!" said Martin, "smooth-tongued villain that he is! He! Give me that other boot, Mark!"

"Where was you a thinking of going to, sir?" inquired Mr. Tapley, drying the sole at the fire, and looking coolly at it as he spoke, as if it were a slice of toast.

"Where!" repeated Martin. "You don't suppose I am going to remain here, do you?"

The imperturbable Mark confessed that he did.

"You do!" retorted Martin angrily. "I am much obliged to you. What do you take me for?"

"I take you for what you are, sir," said Mark; "and consequently, am quite sure that whatever you do, will be right and sensible. The boot, sir."

Martin darted an impatient look at him, without taking it, and walked rapidly up and down the kitchen several times, with one boot and a stocking on. But, mindful of his Eden resolution, he had already gained many victories over himself when Mark was in the case, and he resolved to conquer now. So he came back to the boot-jack, laid his hand on Mark's shoulder to steady himself, pulled the boot off, picked up his slippers, put them on, and sat down again. He could not help thrusting his hands to the

very bottom of his pockets, and muttering at intervals, "Pecksniff too! That fellow! Upon my soul! In-deed! What next?" and so forth: nor could he help occasionally shaking his fist at the chimney, with a very threatening countenance: but this did not last long; and he heard Mrs. Lupin out, if not with composure, at all events in silence.

"As to Mr. Pecksniff himself," observed the hostess in conclusion, spreading out the skirts of her gown with both hands, and nodding her head a great many times as she did so, "I don't know what to say. Somebody must have poisoned his mind, or influenced him in some extraordinary way. I cannot believe that such a noble-spoken gentleman would go and do wrong of his own accord!"

A noble-spoken gentleman! How many people are there in the world, who, for no better reason, uphold their Pecksniffs to the last, and abandon virtuous men, when Pecksniffs breathe upon them!

"As to Mr. Pinch," pursued the landlady, "if ever there was a dear, good, pleasant, worthy, soul alive, Pinch, and no other, is his name. But how do we know that old Mr. Chuzzlewit himself was not the cause of difference arising between him and Mr. Pecksniff? No one but themselves can tell: for Mr. Pinch has a proud spirit, though he has such a quiet way; and when he left us, and was so sorry to go, he scorned to make his story good, even to me."

"Poor old Tom!" said Martin, in a tone that sounded like remorse.

"It's a comfort to know," resumed the landlady, "that he has his sister living with him, and is doing well. Only yesterday he sent me back, by post, a little"—here the colour came into her cheeks—"a little trifle I was bold enough to lend him when he went away: saying, with many thanks, that he had good employment, and didn't want it. It was the same note; he hadn't broken it. I never thought I could have been so little pleased to see a bank-note come back to me, as I was to see that."

"Kindly said, and heartily!" said Martin. "Is it not, Mark?"

"She can't say anything as does not possess them qualities," returned Mr. Tapley; "which as much belong to the Dragon as its licence. And now that we have got quite cool and fresh, to the subject again, sir: what will you do? If you're not proud, and can make up your mind to go through with what you spoke of, coming along, that's the course for you to take. If you started wrong with your grandfather (which, you'll excuse my taking the liberty of saying,

appears to have been the case), up with you, sir, and tell him so, and make an appeal to his affections. Don't stand out. He's a great deal older than you, and if he was hasty, you was hasty too. Give way, sir, give way."

The eloquence of Mr. Tapley was not without its effect on Martin, but he still hesitated, and expressed his reason thus:

"That's all very true, and perfectly correct, Mark; and if it were a mere question of humbling myself before *him*, I would not consider it twice. But don't you see, that being wholly under this hypocrite's government, and having (if what we hear be true) no mind or will of his own, I throw myself, in fact, not at his feet, but at the feet of Mr. Pecksniff? And when I am rejected and spurned away," said Martin, turning crimson at the thought, "it is not by him: my own blood stirred against me: but by Pecksniff—Pecksniff, Mark!"

"Well, but we know beforehand," returned the politic Mr. Tapley, "that Pecksniff is a wagabond, a scoundrel, and a villain."

"A most pernicious villain!" said Martin.

"A most pernicious villain. We know that beforehand, sir; and, consequently, it's no shame to be defeated by Pecksniff. Blow Pecksniff!" cried Mr. Tapley, in the fervour of his eloquence. "Who's he! It's not in the nature of Pecksniff to shame *us*, unless he agreed with us, or done us a service; and, in case he offered any outdacity of that description, we could express our sentiments in the English language I hope? Pecksniff!" repeated Mr. Tapley, with ineffable disdain. "What's Pecksniff, who's Pecksniff, where's Pecksniff, that he's to be so much considered? We're not a calculating for ourselves;" he laid uncommon emphasis on the last syllable of that word, and looked full in Martin's face; "we're making an effort for a young lady likewise as has undergone her share; and whatever little hope we have, this here Pecksniff is not to stand in its way, I expect. I never heard of any act of Parliament as was made by Pecksniff. Pecksniff! Why, I wouldn't see the man myself; I wouldn't hear him; I wouldn't choose to know he was in company. I'd scrape my shoes on the scraper of the door, and call that Pecksniff, if you liked; but I wouldn't condescend no further."

The amazement of Mrs. Lupin, and indeed of Mr. Tapley himself for that matter, at this impassioned flow of language, was immense. But Martin, after looking thoughtfully at the fire for a short time, said:

"You are right, Mark. Right or wrong, it shall be done. I'll do it."

"One word more, sir," returned Mark. "Only think of him so far, as not to give him a handle against you. Don't you do anything secret, that he can report before you get there. Don't you even see Miss Mary in the morning, but let this here dear friend of ours;" Mr. Tapley bestowed a smile upon the hostess; "prepare her for what's a-going to happen, and carry any little message as may be agreeable. She knows how. Don't you?" Mrs. Lupin laughed and tossed her head. "Then you go in, bold and free as a gentleman should. 'I haven't done nothing underhanded,' says you. 'I haven't been a skulking about the premises, here I am, for-give me, I ask your pardon, God Bless You!'"

Martin smiled, but felt that it was good advice notwithstanding, and resolved to act upon it. When they had ascertained from Mrs. Lupin that Pecksniff had already returned from the great ceremonial at which they had beheld him in his glory; and when they had fully arranged the order of their proceedings; they went to bed, intent upon the morrow.

In pursuance of their project as agreed upon at this discussion, Mr. Tapley issued forth next morning, after breakfast, charged with a letter from Martin to his grandfather, requesting leave to wait upon him for a few minutes. And postponing as he went along the congratulations of his numerous friends until a more convenient season, he soon arrived at Mr. Pecksniff's house. At that gentleman's door: with a face so immovable that it would have been next to an impossibility for the most acute physiognomist to determine what he was thinking about, or whether he was thinking at all: he straightway knocked.

A person of Mr. Tapley's observation could not long remain insensible to the fact, that Mr. Pecksniff was making the end of his nose very blunt against the glass of the parlour window, in an angular attempt to discover who had knocked at the door. Nor was Mr. Tapley slow to baffle this movement on the part of the enemy, by perching himself on the top step, and presenting the crown of his hat in that direction. But possibly Mr. Pecksniff had already seen him, for Mark soon heard his shoes creaking, as he advanced to open the door with his own hands.

Mr. Pecksniff was as cheerful as ever, and sang a little song in the passage.

"How d'ye do, sir?" said Mark.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Tapley, I believe? The Prodigal returned! We don't want any beer, my friend."

"Thankee, sir," said Mark. "I couldn't

accommodate you, if you did. A letter, sir. Wait for an answer."

"For me?" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "And an answer, eh?"

"Not for you, I think, sir," said Mark, pointing out the direction. "Chuzzlewit, I believe the name is, sir."

"Oh," returned Mr. Pecksniff. "Thank you. Yes. Who's it from, my good young man?"

"The gentleman it comes from, wrote his name inside, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, with extreme politeness. "I see him a signing of it at the end, while I was a waitin'."

"And he said he wanted an answer did he?" asked Mr. Pecksniff in his most persuasive manner.

Mark replied in the affirmative.

"He shall have an answer. Certainly," said Mr. Pecksniff, tearing the letter into small pieces as mildly as if that were the most flattering attention a correspondent could receive. "Have the goodness to give him that, with my compliments, if you please. Good morning!" Whereupon he handed Mark the scraps; retired; and shut the door.

Mark thought it prudent to subdue his personal emotions, and return to Martin, at the Dragon. They were not unprepared for such a reception, and suffered an hour or so to elapse before making another attempt. When this interval had gone by, they returned to Mr. Pecksniff's house in company. Martin knocked this time, while Mr. Tapley prepared himself to keep the door open with his foot and shoulder, when anybody came, and by that means secure an enforced parley. But this precaution was needless, for the servant-girl appeared almost immediately. Brushing quickly past her as he had resolved in such a case to do, Martin (closely followed by his faithful ally) opened the door of that parlour in which he knew a visitor was most likely to be found; passed at once into the room; and stood, without a word of notice or announcement, in the presence of his grandfather.

Mr. Pecksniff also was in the room; and Mary. In the swift instant of their mutual recognition, Martin saw the old man droop his grey head, and hide his face in his hands.

It smote him to the heart. In his most selfish and most careless day, this lingering remnant of the old man's ancient love, this buttress of a ruined tower he had built up in the time gone by, with so much pride and hope, would have caused a pang in Martin's heart. But now, changed for the better in his worst respect; looking through an altered medium on

his former friend, the guardian of his childhood, so broken and bowed down; resentment, sullenness, self-confidence, and pride, were all swept away, before the starting tears upon the withered cheeks. He could not bear to see them. He could not bear to think they fell at sight of him. He could not bear to view reflected in them, the reproachful and irrevocable Past.

He hurriedly advanced, to seize the old man's hand in his, when Mr. Pecksniff interposed himself between them.

"No, young man!" said Mr. Pecksniff, striking himself upon the breast, and stretching out his other arm towards his guest as if it were a wing to shelter him. "No, sir. None of that. Strike here, sir, here! Launch your arrows at me, sir, if you'll have the goodness; not at Him!"

"Grandfather." cried Martin. "Hear me! I implore you, let me speak!"

"Would you, sir! Would you!" said Mr. Pecksniff, dodging about, so as to keep himself always between them. "Is it not enough, sir, that you come into my house like a thief in the night, or I should rather say, for we can never be too particular on the subject of Truth, like a thief in the day-time: bringing your dissolute companions with you, to plant themselves with their backs against the insides of parlour doors, and prevent the entrance or issuing forth of any of my household;" Mark had taken up this position, and held it quite unmoved; "but would you also strike at venerable *Virtue*? Would you? Know that it is not defenceless. I will be its shield, young man. Assail me. Come on, sir. Fire away!"

"Pecksniff," said the old man, in a feeble voice. "Calm yourself. Be quiet."

"I can't be calm," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "and I won't be quiet. My benefactor and my friend! Shall even my house be no refuge for your hoary pillow!"

"Stand aside!" said the old man, stretching out his hand; "and let me see what it is, I used to love so dearly."

"It is right that you should see it, my friend," said Mr. Pecksniff. "It is well that you should see it, my noble sir. It is desirable that you should contemplate it in its true proportions. Behold it! There it is, sir. There it is!"

Martin could hardly be a mortal man, and not express in his face something of the anger and disdain, with which Mr. Pecksniff inspired him. But, beyond this, he evinced no knowledge whatever of that gentleman's presence or existence. True, he had once, and that at first, glanced at him involuntarily, and with supreme

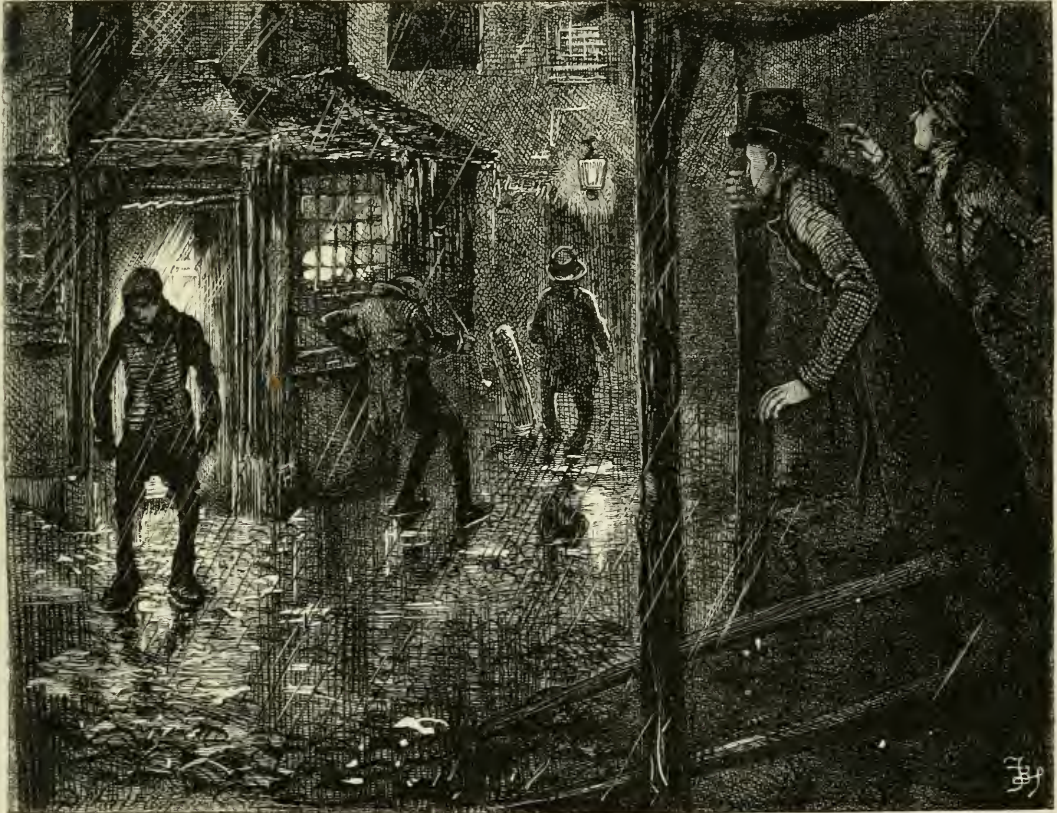
contempt; but for any other heed he took of him, there might have been nothing in his place save empty air.

As Mr. Pecksniff withdrew from between them, agreeably to the wish just now expressed (which he did, during the delivery of the observations last recorded), old Martin, who had taken Mary Graham's hand in his, and whispered kindly to her, as telling her she had no cause to be alarmed, gently pushed her from him, behind his chair; and looked steadily at his grandson.

"And that," he said, "is he. Ah! that is he! Say what you wish to say. But come no nearer."

"His sense of justice is so fine," said Mr. Pecksniff, "that he will hear even him, although he knows beforehand that nothing can come of it. Ingenuous mind!" Mr. Pecksniff did not address himself immediately to any person in saying this, but assuming the position of the Chorus in a Greek Tragedy, delivered his opinion as a commentary on the proceedings.

"Grandfather!" said Martin, with great ear-



FAMILIAR FACES.

nestness. "From a painful journey, from a hard life, from a sick bed, from privation and distress, from gloom and disappointment, from almost hopelessness and despair, I have come back to you."

"Rovers of this sort," observed Mr. Pecksniff as Chorus, "very commonly come back when they find they don't meet with the success they expected in their marauding ravages."

"But for this faithful man," said Martin, MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 22.

turning towards Mark, "whom I first knew in this place, and who went away with me voluntarily, as a servant, but has been, throughout, my zealous and devoted friend; but for him, I must have died abroad. Far from home, far from any help or consolation; far from the probability even of my wretched fate being ever known to any one who cared to hear it—oh that you would let me say, of being known to you!"

The old man looked at Mr. Pecksniff. Mr. Pecksniff looked at him. "Did you speak, my worthy sir?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with a smile. The old man answered in the negative. "I know what you thought," said Mr. Pecksniff, with another smile. "Let him go on, my friend. The development of self-interest in the human mind is always a curious study. Let him go on, sir."

"Go on!" observed the old man; in a mechanical obedience, it appeared, to Mr. Pecksniff's suggestion.

"I have been so wretched and so poor," said Martin, "that I am indebted to the charitable help of a stranger, in a land of strangers, for the means of returning here. All this tells against me in your mind, I know. I have given you cause to think I have been driven here wholly by want, and have not been led on, in any degree, by affection or regret. When I parted from you, Grandfather, I deserved that suspicion, but I do not now. I do not now."

The Chorus put its hand in its waistcoat, and smiled. "Let him go on, my worthy sir," it said. "I know what you are thinking of, but don't express it prematurely."

Old Martin raised his eyes to Mr. Pecksniff's face, and appearing to derive renewed instruction from his looks and words, said once again:

"Go on!"

"I have little more to say," returned Martin. "And as I say it now, with little or no hope, Grandfather; whatever dawn of hope I had on entering the room; believe it to be true. At least believe it to be true."

"Beautiful Truth!" exclaimed the Chorus, looking upward. "How is your name profaned by vicious persons! You don't live in a well, my holy principle, but on the lips of false mankind. It is hard to bear with mankind, dear sir,"—addressing the elder Mr. Chuzzlewit; "but let us do so, meekly. It is our duty so to do. Let us be among the Few who do their duty. If," pursued the Chorus, soaring up into a lofty flight, "as the poet informs us, England expects Every man to do his duty, England is the most sanguine country on the face of the earth, and will find itself continually disappointed."

"Upon that subject," said Martin, looking calmly at the old man as he spoke, but glancing once at Mary, whose face was now buried in her hands, upon the back of his easy chair: "upon that subject, which first occasioned a division between us, my mind and heart are incapable of change. Whatever influence they have undergone, since that unhappy time, has

not been one to weaken but to strengthen me. I cannot profess sorrow for that, nor irresolution in that, nor shame in that. Nor would you wish me, I know. But that I might have trusted to your love, if I had thrown myself manfully upon it; that I might have won you over, with ease, if I had been more yielding, and more considerate; that I should have best remembered myself in forgetting myself, and recollecting you; reflection, solitude, and misery, have taught me. I came, resolved to say this, and to ask your forgiveness: not so much in hope for the future, as in regret for the past: for all that I would ask of you, is, that you would aid me to live. Help me to get honest work to do, and I would do it. My condition places me at the disadvantage of seeming to have only my selfish ends to serve, but try if that be so, or not. Try if I be self-willed, obdurate, and haughty, as I was; or have been disciplined in a rough school. Let the voice of nature and association plead between us, Grandfather; and do not, for one fault, however thankless, quite reject me!"

As he ceased, the grey head of the old man drooped again; and he concealed his face behind his outspread fingers.

"My dear sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, bending over him, "you must not give way to this. It is very natural, and very amiable, but you must not allow the shameless conduct of one whom you long ago cast off, to move you so far. Rouse yourself. Think," said Mr. Pecksniff, "think of Me, my friend."

"I will," returned old Martin, looking up into his face. "You recall me to myself. I will."

"Why, what," said Mr. Pecksniff, sitting down beside him in a chair which he drew up for the purpose, and tapping him playfully on the arm, "what is the matter with my strong-minded compatriot, if I may venture to take the liberty of calling him by that endearing expression! Shall I have to scold my coadjutor, or to reason with an intellect like his! I think not."

"No, no. There is no occasion," said the old man. "A momentary feeling. Nothing more."

"Indignation," observed Mr. Pecksniff, "*will* bring the scalding tear into the honest eye, I know"—he wiped his own elaborately. "But we have higher duties to perform than that. Rouse yourself, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Shall I give expression to your thoughts, my friend?"

"Yes," said old Martin, leaning back in his chair, and looking at him, half in vacancy and

half in admiration, as if he were fascinated by the man. "Speak for me, Pecksniff. Thank you. You are true to me. Thank you!"

"Do not unman me, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his hand vigorously, "or I shall be unequal to the task. It is not agreeable to my feelings, my good sir, to address the person who is now before us, for when I ejected him from this house, after hearing of his unnatural conduct from your lips, I renounced communication with him for ever. But you desire it; and that is sufficient. Young man! The door is immediately behind the companion of your infamy. Blush if you can; begone without a blush, if you can't."

Martin looked as steadily at his grandfather as if there had been a dead silence all this time. The old man looked no less steadily at Mr. Pecksniff.

"When I ordered you to leave this house upon the last occasion of your being dismissed from it with disgrace," said Mr. Pecksniff: "when, stung and stimulated beyond endurance by your shameless conduct to this extraordinarily noble-minded individual, I exclaimed 'Go forth!' I told you that I wept for your depravity. Do not suppose that the tear which stands in my eye at this moment, is shed for you. It is shed for him, sir. It is shed for him."

Here Mr. Pecksniff, accidentally dropping the tear in question on a bald part of Mr. Chuzzlewit's head, wiped the place with his pocket-handkerchief, and begged pardon.

"It is shed for him, sir, whom you seek to make the victim of your arts," said Mr. Pecksniff: "whom you seek to plunder, to deceive, and to mislead. It is shed in sympathy with him, and admiration of him; not in pity for him, for happily he knows what you are. You shall not wrong him further, sir, in any way," said Mr. Pecksniff, quite transported with enthusiasm, "while I have life. You may bestride my senseless corse, sir. That is very likely. I can imagine a mind like yours deriving great satisfaction from any measure of that kind. But while I continue to be called upon to exist, sir, you must strike at him through me. Aye!" said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head at Martin with indignant jocularly; "and in such a cause you will find me, my young sir, an Ugly Customer!"

Still Martin looked steadily and mildly at his grandfather. "Will you give me no answer," he said, at length, "not a word?"

"You hear what has been said," replied the old man, without averting his eyes from the

face of Mr. Pecksniff: who nodded encouragingly.

"I have not heard your voice. I have not heard your spirit," returned Martin.

"Tell him again," said the old man, still gazing up in Mr. Pecksniff's face.

"I only hear," replied Martin, strong in his purpose from the first, and stronger in it as he felt how Pecksniff winced and shrunk beneath his contempt; "I only hear what you say to me, grandfather."

Perhaps it was well for Mr. Pecksniff that his venerable friend found in his (Mr. Pecksniff's) features an exclusive and engrossing object of contemplation, for if his eyes had gone astray, and he had compared young Martin's bearing with that of his zealous defender, the latter disinterested gentleman would scarcely have shown to greater advantage than on the memorable afternoon when he took Tom Pinch's last receipt in full of all demands. One really might have thought there was some quality in Mr. Pecksniff—an emanation from the brightness and purity within him perhaps—which set off and adorned his foes: they looked so gallant and so manly beside him.

"Not a word?" said Martin, for the second time.

"I remember that I have a word to say, Pecksniff," observed the old man. "But a word. You spoke of being indebted to the charitable help of some stranger for the means of returning to England. Who is he? And what help in money, did he render you?"

Although he asked this question of Martin, he did not look towards him, but kept his eyes on Mr. Pecksniff as before. It appeared to have become a habit with him, both in a literal and figurative sense, to look to Mr. Pecksniff alone.

Martin took out his pencil, tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and hastily wrote down the particulars of his debt to Mr. Bevan. The old man stretched out his hand for the paper, and took it; but his eyes did not wander from Mr. Pecksniff's face.

"It would be a poor pride and a false humility," said Martin, in a low voice, "to say, I do not wish that to be paid, or that I have any present hope of being able to pay it. But I never felt my poverty so deeply as I feel it now."

"Read it to me, Pecksniff," said the old man.

Mr. Pecksniff, after approaching the perusal of the paper as if it were a manuscript confession of a murder, complied.

"I think, Pecksniff," said old Martin, "I

could wish that to be discharged. I should not like the lender, who was abroad; and who had no opportunity of making inquiry, and who did (as he thought) a kind action; to suffer."

"An honourable sentiment, my dear sir. Your own entirely. But a dangerous precedent," said Mr. Pecksniff, "permit me to suggest."

"It shall not be a precedent," returned the old man. "It is the only recognition of him. But we will talk of it again. You shall advise me. There is nothing else?"

"Nothing else," said Mr. Pecksniff buoyantly, "but for you to recover this intrusion—this cowardly and indefensible outrage on your feelings—with all possible dispatch, and smile again."

"You have nothing more to say?" inquired the old man, laying his hand with unusual earnestness on Mr. Pecksniff's sleeve.

Mr. Pecksniff would not say what rose to his lips. For reproaches, he observed, were useless.

"You have nothing at all to urge? You are sure of that? If you have, no matter what it is, speak freely. I will oppose nothing that you ask of me," said the old man.

The tears rose in such abundance to Mr. Pecksniff's eyes at this proof of unlimited confidence on the part of his friend, that he was fain to clasp the bridge of his nose convulsively before he could at all compose himself. When he had the power of utterance again, he said, with great emotion, that he hoped he should live to deserve this; and added, that he had no other observation whatever to make.

For a few moments the old man sat looking at him, with that blank and motionless expression which is not uncommon in the faces of those whose faculties are on the wane, in age. But he rose up firmly too, and walked towards the door, from which Mark withdrew to make way for him.

The obsequious Mr. Pecksniff proffered his arm. The old man took it. Turning at the door, he said to Martin, waving him off with his hand,

"You have heard him. Go away. It is all over. Go!"

Mr. Pecksniff murmured certain cheering expressions of sympathy and encouragement as they retired; and Martin, awakening from the stupor into which the closing portion of this scene had plunged him, to the opportunity afforded by their departure, caught the innocent cause of all in his embrace, and pressed her to his heart.

"Dear girl!" said Martin. "He has not

changed you. Why, what an impotent and harmless knave the fellow is!"

"You have restrained yourself so nobly! You have borne so much!"

"Restrained myself!" cried Martin, cheerfully. "You were by, and were unchanged, I knew. What more advantage did I want? The sight of me was such a bitterness to the dog, that I had my triumph in his being forced to endure it. But tell me, love—for the few hasty words we can exchange now are precious—what is this which has been rumoured to me? Is it true that you are persecuted by this knave's addresses?"

"I was, dear Martin, and to some extent am now; but my chief source of unhappiness has been anxiety for you. Why did you leave us in such terrible suspense?"

"Sickness, distance; the dread of hinting at our real condition, the impossibility of concealing it except in perfect silence; the knowledge that the truth would have pained you infinitely more than uncertainty and doubt," said Martin, hurriedly; as indeed everything else was done and said, in those few hurried moments, "were the causes of my writing only once. But Pecksniff? You needn't fear to tell me the whole tale: for you saw me with him face to face, hearing him speak, and not taking him by the throat: what is the history of his pursuit of you? Is it known to my grandfather?"

"Yes."

"And he assists him in it?"

"No," she answered eagerly.

"Thank Heaven!" cried Martin, "that it leaves his mind unclouded in that one respect!"

"I do not think," said Mary, "it was known to him at first. When this man had sufficiently prepared his mind, he revealed it to him by degrees. I think so, but I only know it from my own impression: not from anything they told me. Then he spoke to me alone."

"My grandfather did?" said Martin.

"Yes—spoke to me alone, and told me—"

"What the hound had said," cried Martin. "Don't repeat it."

"And said I knew well what qualities he possessed; that he was moderately rich; in good repute; and high in his favour and confidence. But seeing me very much distressed, he said that he would not control or force my inclinations, but would content himself with telling me the fact. He would not pain me by dwelling on it, or reverting to it: nor has he ever done so since, but has truly kept his word."

"The man himself?" asked Martin.

"He has had few opportunities of pursuing

his suit. I have never walked out alone, or remained alone an instant in his presence. Dear Martin, I must tell you," she continued, "that the kindness of your grandfather to me, remains unchanged. I am his companion still. An indescribable tenderness and compassion seem to have mingled themselves with his old regard; and if I were his only child, I could not have a gentler father. What former fancy or old habit survives in this, when his heart has turned so cold to you, is a mystery I cannot penetrate; but it has been, and it is, a happiness to me, that I remained true to him; that if he should wake from his delusion, even at the point of death, I am here, love, to recall you to his thoughts."

Martin looked with admiration on her glowing face, and pressed his lips to hers.

"I have sometimes heard, and read," she said, "that those whose powers had been enfeebled long ago, and whose lives had faded, as it were, into a dream, have been known to rouse themselves before death, and inquire for familiar faces once very dear to them; but forgotten, unrecognised, hated even, in the meantime. Think, if with his old impressions of this man, he should suddenly resume his former self, and find in him his only friend!"

"I would not urge you to abandon him, dearest," said Martin, "though I could count the years we are to wear out asunder. But the influence this fellow exercises over him, has steadily increased, I fear."

She could not help admitting that. Steadily, imperceptibly, and surely, until now it was paramount and supreme. She herself had none; and yet he treated her with more affection than at any previous time. Martin thought the inconsistency a part of his weakness and decay.

"Does the influence extend to fear?" said Martin. "Is he timid of asserting his own opinion in the presence of this infatuation? I fancied so just now."

"I have thought so, often. Often when we are sitting alone, almost as we used to do, and I have been reading a favourite book to him, or he has been talking quite cheerfully, I have observed that the entrance of Mr. Pecksniff has changed his whole demeanour. He has broken off immediately, and become what you have seen to-day. When we first came here he had his impetuous outbreaks, in which it was not easy for Mr. Pecksniff with his utmost plausibility to appease him. But these have long since dwindled away. He defers to him in everything, and has no opinion upon any ques-

tion, but that which is forced upon him by this treacherous man."

Such was the account; rapidly furnished in whispers, and interrupted, brief as it was, by many false alarms of Mr. Pecksniff's return; which Martin received of his grandfather's decline, and of that good gentleman's ascendancy. He heard of Tom Pinch too, and Jonas too, with not a little about himself into the bargain; for though lovers are remarkable for leaving a great deal unsaid on all occasions, and very properly desiring to come back and say it, they are remarkable also for a wonderful power of condensation; and can, in one way or other, give utterance to more language—eloquent language—in any given short space of time, than all the six hundred and fifty-eight members in the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; who are strong lovers, no doubt, but of their country only, which makes all the difference; for in a passion of that kind (which is not always returned), it is the custom to use as many words as possible, and express nothing whatever.

A caution from Mr. Tapley; a hasty interchange of farewells, and of something else which the proverb says must not be told of afterwards; a white hand held out to Mr. Tapley himself, which he kissed with the devotion of a knight-errant; more farewells, more something else's; a parting word from Martin that he would write from London and would do great things there yet (Heaven knows what, but he quite believed it); and Mark and he stood on the outside of the Pecksniffian halls.

"A short interview after such an absence!" said Martin, sorrowfully. "But we are well out of the house. We might have placed ourselves in a false position by remaining there, even so long, Mark."

"I don't know about ourselves, sir," he returned; "but somebody else would have got into a false position, if he had happened to come back again, while we was there. I had the door all ready, sir. If Pecksniff had showed his head, or had only so much as listened behind it, I would have caught him like a walnut. He's the sort of man," added Mr. Tapley, musing, "as would squeeze soft, I know."

A person who was evidently going to Mr. Pecksniff's house, passed them at this moment. He raised his eyes at the mention of the architect's name; and when he had gone on a few yards, stopped, and gazed at them. Mr. Tapley, also, looked over his shoulder, and so did Martin; for the stranger, as he passed, had looked very sharply at them.

"Who may that be, I wonder?" said Martin. "The face seems familiar to me, but I don't know the man."

"He seems to have a amiable desire that his face should be tolerable familiar to us," said Mr. Tapley, "for he's a staring pretty hard. He'd better not waste his beauty, for he ain't got much to spare."

Coming in sight of the Dragon, they saw a travelling carriage at the door.

"And a Salisbury carriage, eh!" said Mr. Tapley. "That's what he came in, depend upon it. What's in the wind now? A new pupil, I shouldn't wonder. P'raps it's a order for another grammar-school, of the same pattern as the last."

Before they could enter at the door, Mrs. Lupin came running out; and beckoning them to the carriage showed them a portmanteau with the name of CHUZZLEWIT upon it.

"Miss Pecksniff's husband that was," said the good woman to Martin. "I didn't know what terms you might be on, and was quite in a worry till you came back."

"He and I have never interchanged a word yet," observed Martin; "and as I have no wish to be better or worse acquainted with him, I will not put myself in his way. We passed him on the road, I have no doubt. I am glad he timed his coming, as he did. Upon my word! Miss Pecksniff's husband travels gaily!"

"A very fine-looking gentleman with him—in the best room now," whispered Mrs. Lupin, glancing up at the window as they went into the house. "He has ordered everything that can be got for dinner; and has the glossiest moustaches and whiskers, ever you saw."

"Has he?" cried Martin, "why then we'll endeavour to avoid him too, in the hope that our self-denial may be strong enough for the sacrifice. It is only for a few hours," said Martin, dropping wearily into a chair behind the little screen in the bar. "Our visit has met with no success, my dear Mrs. Lupin, and I must go to London."

"Dear, dear!" cried the hostess.

"Yes. One foul wind no more makes a winter, than one swallow makes a summer.—I'll try it again. Tom Pinch has succeeded. With his advice to guide me, I may do the same. I took Tom under my protection once, God save the mark!" said Martin, with a melancholy smile; "and promised I would make his fortune. Perhaps Tom will take me under *his* protection now, and teach me how to earn my bread."

CHAPTER XLIV.

FURTHER CONTINUATION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.



I was a special quality, among the many admirable qualities possessed by Mr. Pecksniff, that the more he was found out, the more hypocrisy he practised. Let him be discomfited in one quarter, and he refreshed and recompensed himself by carrying the war into another. If his workings and windings were detected by A, so much the greater reason was there for practising without loss of time on B, if it were only to keep his hand in. He had never been such a saintly and improving spectacle to all about him, as after his detection by Thomas Pinch. He had scarcely ever been at once so tender in his humanity, and so dignified and exalted in his virtue, as when young Martin's scorn was fresh and hot upon him.

Having this large stock of superfluous sentiment and morality on hand which must positively be cleared off at any sacrifice, Mr. Pecksniff no sooner heard his son-in-law announced, than he regarded him as a kind of wholesale or general order, to be immediately executed. Descending, therefore, swiftly to the parlour, and clasping the young man in his arms, he exclaimed, with looks and gestures that denoted the perturbation of his spirit:

"Jonas! My child—she is well? There is nothing the matter?"

"What you're at it again, are you?" replied his son-in-law. "Even with me? Get away with you, will you?"

"Tell me she is well, then," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Tell me she is well, my Boy!"

"She's well enough," retorted Jonas, disengaging himself. "There's nothing the matter with *her*."

"There is nothing the matter with her!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, sitting down in the nearest chair, and rubbing up his hair. "Fie upon my weakness! I cannot help it, Jonas. Thank you. I am better now. How is my other child; my eldest; my Cherrywerrychigo?" said Mr. Pecksniff, inventing a playful little name for her, in the restored lightness of his heart.

"She's much about the same as usual," returned Mr. Jonas. "She sticks pretty close to the vinegar-bottle. You know she's got a sweet-heart, I suppose?"

"I have heard of it," said Mr. Pecksniff, "from head-quarters; from my child herself. I will not deny that it moved me to contemplate

the loss of my remaining daughter, Jonas—I am afraid we parents are selfish, I am afraid we are—but it has ever been the study of my life to qualify them for the domestic hearth; and it is a sphere which Cherry will adorn.”

“She need adorn some sphere or other,” observed his son-in-law, “for she ain’t very ornamental in general.”

“My girls are now provided for,” said Mr. Pecksniff. “They are now happily provided for, and I have not laboured in vain!”

This is exactly what Mr. Pecksniff would have said, if one of his daughters had drawn a prize of thirty thousand pounds in the lottery, or if the other had picked up a valuable purse in the street, which nobody appeared to claim. In either of these cases, he would have invoked a patriarchal blessing on the fortunate head, with great solemnity, and would have taken immense credit to himself, as having meant it from the infant’s cradle.

“Suppose we talk about something else, now,” observed Jonas, drily; “just for a change. Are you quite agreeable?”

“Quite,” said Mr. Pecksniff. “Ah, you wag, you naughty wag! You laugh at poor old fond papa. Well! He deserves it. And he don’t mind it either, for his feelings are their own reward. You have come to stay with me, Jonas?”

“No. I’ve got a friend with me,” said Jonas.

“Bring your friend,” cried Mr. Pecksniff, in a gush of hospitality. “Bring any number of your friends!”

“This ain’t the sort of man to be brought,” said Jonas, contemptuously. “I think I see myself ‘bringing’ him to your house, for a treat! Thank’ee all the same; but he’s a little too near the top of the tree for that, Pecksniff.”

The good man pricked up his ears; his interest was awakened. A position near the top of the tree was greatness, virtue, goodness, sense, genius; or, it should rather be said, a dispensation from all, and in itself something immeasurably better than all; with Mr. Pecksniff. A man who was able to look down upon Mr. Pecksniff could not be looked up at, by that gentleman, with too great an amount of deference, or from a position of too much humility. So it always is with great spirits.

“I’ll tell you what you may do, if you like,” said Jonas: “you may come and dine with us at the Dragon. We were forced to come down to Salisbury last night, on some business, and I got him to bring me over here this morning, in his carriage; at least, not his own carriage, for we had a break-down in the night, but one we hired instead; it’s all the same. Mind what

you’re about, you know. He’s not used to all sorts; he only mixes with the best!”

“Some young nobleman who has been borrowing money of you at good interest, eh?” said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his forefinger facetiously. “I shall be delighted to know the gay sprig.”

“Borrowing!” echoed Jonas. “Borrowing! When you’re a twentieth part as rich as he is, you may shut up shop! We should be pretty well off, if we could buy his furniture, and plate, and pictures, by clubbing together. A likely man to borrow: Mr. Montague! Why, since I was lucky enough (come! and I’ll say, sharp enough, too) to get a share in the Insurance Office that he’s President of, I’ve made—never mind what I’ve made,” said Jonas, seeming to recover all at once his usual caution. “You know me pretty well, and I don’t blab about such things. But, Ecod, I’ve made a trifle.”

“Really, my dear Jonas,” cried Mr. Pecksniff, with much warmth, “a gentleman like this should receive some attention. Would he like to see the church? or if he has a taste for the fine arts—which I have no doubt he has, from the description you give of his circumstances—I can send him down a few portfolios. Salisbury Cathedral, my dear Jonas,” said Mr. Pecksniff; the mention of the portfolios, and his anxiety to display himself to advantage, suggesting his usual phraseology in that regard; “is an edifice replete with venerable associations, and strikingly suggestive of the loftiest emotions. It is here we contemplate the work of bygone ages. It is here we listen to the swelling organ, as we stroll through the reverberating aisles. We have drawings of this celebrated structure from the North, from the South, from the East, from the West, from the South-East, from the Nor’-West——”

During this digression, and indeed during the whole dialogue, Jonas had been rocking on his chair, with his hands in his pockets, and his head thrown cunningly on one side. He looked at Mr. Pecksniff now with such shrewd meaning twinkling in his eyes, that Mr. Pecksniff stopped, and asked him what he was going to say.

“Ecod!” he answered. “Pecksniff, if I knew how you meant to leave your money, I could put you in the way of doubling it, in no time. It wouldn’t be bad to keep a chance like this snug in the family. But you’re such a deep one!”

“Jonas!” cried Mr. Pecksniff, much affected, “I am not a diplomatical character; my heart is in my hand. By far the greater part of the inconsiderable savings I have accumulated in

the course of—I hope—a not dishonourable or useless career, is already given, devised, and bequeathed (correct me, my dear Jonas, if I am technically wrong), with expressions of confidence, which I will not repeat; and in securities which it is unnecessary to mention; to a person whom I cannot, whom I will not, whom I need not, name.” Here he gave the hand of his son-in-law a fervent squeeze, as if he would have added, “God bless you; be very careful of it when you get it!”

Mr. Jonas only shook his head and laughed, and, seeming to think better of what he had had in his mind, said, “No. He would keep his own counsel.” But as he observed that he would take a walk, Mr. Pecksniff insisted on accompanying him, remarking that he could leave a card for Mr. Montague, as they went along, by way of gentleman-usher to himself at dinner-time. Which he did.

In the course of their walk, Mr. Jonas affected to maintain that close reserve which had operated as a timely check upon him during the foregoing dialogue. And as he made no attempt to conciliate Mr. Pecksniff, but, on the contrary, was more boorish and rude to him than usual, that gentleman, so far from suspecting his real design, laid himself out to be attacked with advantage. For it is in the nature of a knave to think the tools with which he works indispensable to knavery; and knowing what he would do himself in such a case, Mr. Pecksniff argued, “if this young man wanted anything of me for his own ends, he would be polite and deferential.”

The more Jonas repelled him in his hints and inquiries, the more solicitous, therefore, Mr. Pecksniff became to be initiated into the golden mysteries at which he had obscurely glanced. Why should there be cold and worldly secrets, he observed, between relations? What was life without confidence? If the chosen husband of his daughter, the man to whom he had delivered her with so much pride and hope, such bounding and such beaming joy: if he were not a green spot in the barren waste of life, where was that Oasis to be found?

Little did Mr. Pecksniff think on what a very green spot he planted one foot at that moment! Little did he foresee when he said, “All is but dust!” how very shortly he would come down with his own!

Inch by inch, in his grudging and ill-conditioned way: sustained to the life, for the hope of making Mr. Pecksniff suffer in that tender place, the pocket, where Jonas smarted so terribly himself, gave him an additional and mali-

cious interest in the wiles he was set on to practise: inch by inch, and bit by bit, Jonas rather allowed the dazzling prospects of the Anglo-Bengalee establishment to escape him, than paraded them before his greedy listener. And in the same niggardly spirit, he left Mr. Pecksniff to infer, if he chose (which he *did* choose, of course), that a consciousness of not having any great natural gifts of speech and manner himself, rendered him desirous to have the credit of introducing to Mr. Montague some one who was well endowed in those respects, and so atone for his own deficiencies. Otherwise, he muttered discontentedly, he would have seen his beloved father-in-law “far enough off,” before he would have taken him into his confidence.

Primed in this artful manner, Mr. Pecksniff presented himself at dinner-time in such a state of suavity, benevolence, cheerfulness, politeness, and cordiality, as even he had perhaps never attained before. The frankness of the country gentleman, the refinement of the artist, the good-humoured allowance of the man of the world; philanthropy, forbearance, piety, toleration, all blended together in a flexible adaptability to anything and everything; were expressed in Mr. Pecksniff, as he shook hands with the great speculator and capitalist.

“Welcome, respected sir,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “to our humble village! We are a simple people; primitive clods, Mr. Montague; but we can appreciate the honour of your visit, as my dear son-in-law can testify. It is very strange,” said Mr. Pecksniff, pressing his hand almost reverentially, “but I seem to know you. That towering forehead, my dear Jonas,” said Mr. Pecksniff aside, “and those clustering masses of rich hair—I must have seen you, my dear sir, in the sparkling throng.”

Nothing was more probable, they all agreed.

“I could have wished,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “to have had the honour of introducing you to an elderly inmate of our house: to the uncle of our friend. Mr. Chuzzlewit, sir, would have been proud indeed to have taken you by the hand.”

“Is the gentleman here now?” asked Montague, turning deeply red.

“He is,” said Mr. Pecksniff.

“You said nothing about that, Chuzzlewit.”

“I didn’t suppose you’d care to hear of it,” returned Jonas. “You wouldn’t care to know him, I can promise you.”

“Jonas! my dear Jonas!” remonstrated Mr. Pecksniff. “Really!”

“Oh! it’s all very well for you to speak up

for him," said Jonas. "You have nailed him. You'll get a fortune by him."

"Oho! Is the wind in that quarter!" cried Montague. "Ha, ha, ha!" and here they all laughed—especially Mr. Pecksniff.

"No, no!" said that gentleman, clapping his son-in-law playfully upon the shoulder. "You must not believe all that my young relative says, Mr. Montague. You may believe him in official business, and trust him in official business, but you must not attach importance to his flights of fancy."

"Upon my life, Mr. Pecksniff," cried Montague, "I attach the greatest importance to that last observation of his. I trust and hope it's true. Money cannot be turned and turned again quickly enough in the ordinary course, Mr. Pecksniff. There is nothing like building our fortunes on the weaknesses of mankind."

"Oh fie! Oh fie! Oh fie, for shame!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. But they all laughed again—especially Mr. Pecksniff.

"I give you my honour that *we* do it," said Montague.



"OH FIE, FIE!" CRIED MR. PECKSNIFF. "YOU ARE VERY PLEASANT. THAT I AM SURE YOU DON'T: THAT I AM SURE YOU DON'T! HOW CAN YOU, YOU KNOW?"

"Oh fie, fie!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "You are very pleasant. That I am sure you don't! That I am sure you don't! How *can* you, you know?"

Again they all laughed in concert; and again Mr. Pecksniff laughed especially.

This was very agreeable indeed. It was confidential, easy, straightforward: and still left Mr. Pecksniff in the position of being in a gentle way the Mentor of the party. The greatest achievements in the article of cookery that the Dragon had ever performed, were set before them; the oldest and best wines in the Dragon's cellar saw the light on that occasion; a thousand

bubbles, indicative of the wealth and station of Mr. Montague in the depths of his pursuits, were constantly rising to the surface of the conversation; and they were as frank and merry as three honest men could be. Mr. Pecksniff thought it a pity (he said so) that Mr. Montague should think lightly of mankind and their weaknesses. He was anxious upon this subject; his mind ran upon it; in one way or another he was constantly coming back to it; he must make a convert of him, he said. And as often as Mr. Montague repeated his sentiment about building fortunes on the weaknesses of man-

kind, and added frankly, "He do it!" just as often Mr. Pecksniff repeated "Oh fie! Oh fie, for shame! I am sure you don't. How *can* you, you know?" laying a greater stress each time on those last words.

The frequent repetition of this playful inquiry on the part of Mr. Pecksniff, led at last to playful answers on the part of Mr. Montague; but after some little sharp-shooting on both sides, Mr. Pecksniff became grave, almost to tears; observing that if Mr. Montague would give him leave, he would drink the health of his young kinsman, Mr. Jonas: congratulating him upon the valuable and distinguished friendship he had formed, but envying him, he would confess, his usefulness to his fellow-creatures. For if he understood the objects of that Institution with which he was newly and advantageously connected—knowing them but imperfectly—they were calculated to do Good; and for his (Mr. Pecksniff's) part, if he could in any way promote them, he thought he would be able to lay his head upon his pillow every night, with an absolute certainty of going to sleep at once.

The transition from this accidental remark (for it was quite accidental, and had fallen from Mr. Pecksniff in the openness of his soul), to the discussion of the subject as a matter of business, was easy. Books, papers, statements, tables, calculations of various kinds, were soon spread out before them: and as they were all framed with one object, it is not surprising that they should all have tended to one end. But still, whenever Montague enlarged upon the profits of the office, and said that as long as there were gulls upon the wing it must succeed, Mr. Pecksniff mildly said, "Oh fie!"—and might indeed have remonstrated with him, but that he knew he was joking. Mr. Pecksniff did know he was joking; because he said so.

There never had been before, and there never would be again, such an opportunity for the investment of a considerable sum (the rate of advantage increased in proportion to the amount invested), as at that moment. The only time that had at all approached it, was the time when Jonas had come into the concern; which made him ill-natured now, and inclined him to pick out a doubt in this place, and a flaw in that, and grumblingly to advise Mr. Pecksniff to think better of it. The sum which would complete the proprietorship in this snug concern, was nearly equal to Mr. Pecksniff's whole hoard; not counting Mr. Chuzzlewit, that is to say, whom he looked upon as money in the Bank, the possession of which inclined him the more to make a dash with his own private sprats for the capture

of such a whale as Mr. Montague described. The returns began almost immediately, and were immense. The end of it was, that Mr. Pecksniff agreed to become the last partner and proprietor in the Anglo-Bengalee, and made an appointment to dine with Mr. Montague, at Salisbury, on the next day but one, then and there to complete the negotiation.

It took so long to bring the subject to this head, that it was nearly midnight when they parted. When Mr. Pecksniff walked down-stairs to the door, he found Mrs. Lupin standing there, looking out.

"Ah, my good friend!" he said: "not a-bed yet! Contemplating the stars, Mrs. Lupin?"

"It's a beautiful starlight night, sir."

"A beautiful starlight night," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking up. "Behold the planets, how they shine! Behold the——those two persons who were here this morning, have left your house, I hope, Mrs. Lupin?"

"Yes, sir. They are gone."

"I am glad to hear it," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Behold the wonders of the firmament, Mrs. Lupin! How glorious is this scene! When I look up at those shining orbs, I think that each of them is winking to the other to take notice of the vanity of men's pursuits. My fellow-men!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head in pity; "you are much mistaken; my wormy relatives, you are much deceived! The stars are perfectly contented (I suppose so) in their several spheres. Why are not you? Oh! do not strive and struggle to enrich yourselves, or to get the better of each other, my deluded friends, but look up there, with me!"

Mrs. Lupin shook her head, and heaved a sigh. It was very affecting.

"Look up there, with me!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand; "with me, an humble individual who is also an Insect like yourselves. Can silver, gold, or precious stones, sparkle like those constellations! I think not. Then do not thirst for silver, gold, or precious stones; but look up there, with me!"

With these words, the good man patted Mrs. Lupin's hand between his own, as if he would have added, "think of this, my good woman!" and walked away in a sort of ecstasy or rapture, with his hat under his arm.

Jonas sat in the attitude in which Mr. Pecksniff had left him, gazing moodily at his friend: who, surrounded by a heap of documents, was writing something on an oblong slip of paper.

"You mean to wait at Salisbury over the day after to-morrow, do you, then?" said Jonas.

"You heard our appointment," returned

Montague, without raising his eyes. "In any case I should have waited to see after the boy."

They appeared to have changed places again; Montague being in high spirits; and Jonas gloomy and louring.

"You don't want me, I suppose?" said Jonas.

"I want you to put your name here," he returned, glancing at him with a smile, "as soon as I have filled up the stamp. I may as well have your note of hand for that extra capital. That's all I want. If you wish to go home, I can manage Mr. Pecksniff now, alone. There is a perfect understanding between us."

Jonas sat scowling at him as he wrote, in silence. When he had finished his writing, and had dried it on the blotting-paper in his travelling desk; he looked up, and tossed the pen towards him.

"What, not a day's grace, not a day's trust, eh?" said Jonas, bitterly. "Not after the pains I have taken with to-night's work?"

"To-night's work was a part of our bargain," replied Montague; "and so was this."

"You drive a hard bargain," said Jonas, advancing to the table. "You know best. Give it here!"

Montague gave him the paper. After pausing as if he could not make up his mind to put his name to it, Jonas dipped his pen hastily in the nearest inkstand, and began to write. But he had scarcely marked the paper when he started back, in a panic.

"Why, what the devil's this?" he said. "It's bloody!"

He had dipped the pen, as another moment showed, into red ink. But he attached a strange degree of importance to the mistake. He asked how it had come there, who had brought it, why it had been brought; and looked at Montague, at first, as if he thought he had put a trick upon him. Even when he used a different pen, and the right ink, he made some scratches on another paper first, as half believing they would turn red also.

"Black enough this time," he said, handing the note to Montague. "Good-bye!"

"Going now! How do you mean to get away from here?"

"I shall cross early in the morning, to the high road before you are out of bed; and catch the day-coach, going up. Good-bye!"

"You are in a hurry!"

"I have something to do," said Jonas. "Good-bye!"

His friend looked after him as he went out, in

surprise, which gradually gave place to an air of satisfaction and relief.

"It happens all the better. It brings about what I wanted, without any difficulty. I shall travel home alone."

CHAPTER XLV.

IN WHICH TOM PINCH AND HIS SISTER TAKE A LITTLE PLEASURE: BUT QUITE IN A DOMESTIC WAY, AND WITH NO CEREMONY ABOUT IT.



TOM PINCH and his sister having to part, for the dispatch of the morning's business, immediately after the dispersion of the other actors in the scene upon the Wharf with which the reader has been already made acquainted, had no opportunity of discussing the subject at that time. But Tom in his solitary office, and Ruth, in the triangular parlour, thought about nothing else all day; and, when their hour of meeting in the afternoon approached, they were very full of it, to be sure.

There was a little plot between them, that Tom should always come out of the Temple by one way; and that was past the fountain. Coming through Fountain Court, he was just to glance down the steps leading into Garden Court, and to look once all round him; and if Ruth had come to meet him, there he would see her; not sauntering, you understand (on account of the clerks), but coming briskly up, with the best little laugh upon her face that ever played in opposition to the fountain, and beat it all to nothing. For, fifty to one, Tom had been looking for her in the wrong direction, and had quite given her up, while she had been tripping towards him from the first; jingling that little reticule of hers (with all the keys in it) to attract his wandering observation.

Whether there was life enough left in the slow vegetation of Fountain Court for the smoky shrubs to have any consciousness of the brightest and purest-hearted little woman in the world, is a question for gardeners, and those who are learned in the loves of plants. But, that it was a good thing for that same paved yard to have such a delicate little figure flitting through it; that it passed like a smile from the grimy old houses, and the worn flagstones, and left them duller, darker, sterner than before; there is no sort of doubt. The Temple fountain might have leaped up twenty feet to greet the spring of hopeful maidenhood, that in her person stole on,

sparkling through the dry and dusty channels of the Law; the chirping sparrows, bred in Temple chinks and crannies, might have held their peace to listen to imaginary skylarks, as so fresh a little creature passed; the dingy boughs, unused to droop, otherwise than in their puny growth, might have bent down in a kindred gracefulness, to shed their benedictions on her graceful head; old love letters, shut up in iron boxes in the neighbouring offices, and made of no account among the heaps of family papers into which they had strayed, and of which, in their degeneracy, they formed a part, might have stirred and fluttered with a moment's recollection of their ancient tenderness, as she went lightly by. Anything might have happened that did not happen, and never will, for the love of Ruth.

Something happened, too, upon the afternoon of which the history treats. Not for her love. Oh no! quite by accident, and without the least reference to her at all.

Either she was a little too soon, or Tom was a little too late—she was so precise in general, that she timed it to half a minute—but no Tom was there. Well! But was anybody else there, that she blushed so deeply, after looking round, and tripped off down the steps with such unusual expedition?

Why, the fact is, that Mr. Westlock was passing at that moment. The Temple is a public thoroughfare; they may write up on the gates that it is not, but so long as the gates are left open it is, and will be; and Mr. Westlock had as good a right to be there as anybody else. But why did she run away, then? Not being ill dressed, for she was much too neat for that, why did she run away? The brown hair that had fallen down beneath her bonnet, and had one impertinent imp of a false flower clinging to it, boastful of its licence before all men, *that* could not have been the cause, for it looked charming. Oh! foolish, panting, frightened little heart, why did she run away!

Merrily the tiny fountain played, and merrily the dimples sparkled on its sunny face. John Westlock hurried after her. Softly the whispering water broke and fell: and roguishly the dimples twinkled, as he stole upon her footsteps.

Oh, foolish, panting, timid little heart, why did she feign to be unconscious of his coming! Why wish herself so far away, yet be so flutteringly happy there!

"I felt sure it was you," said John, when he overtook her, in the sanctuary of Garden Court. "I knew I couldn't be mistaken."

She was so surprised.

"You are waiting for your brother," said John. "Let me bear you company."

So light was the touch of the coy little hand, that he glanced down to assure himself he had it on his arm. But his glance, stopping for an instant at the bright eyes, forgot its first design, and went no farther.

They walked up and down three or four times, speaking about Tom and his mysterious employment. Now that was a very natural and innocent subject, surely. Then why, whenever Ruth lifted up her eyes, did she let them fall again immediately, and seek the uncongenial pavement of the court? They were not such eyes as shun the light; they were not such eyes as require to be hoarded to enhance their value. They were much too precious and too genuine to stand in need of arts like those. Somebody must have been looking at them!

They found out Tom, though, quickly enough. This pair of eyes descried him in the distance, the moment he appeared. He was staring about him, as usual, in all directions but the right one; and was as obstinate in not looking towards them, as if he had intended it. As it was plain that, being left to himself, he would walk away home, John Westlock darted off to stop him.

This made the approach of poor little Ruth, by herself, one of the most embarrassing of circumstances. There was Tom, manifesting extreme surprise (he had no presence of mind, that Tom, on small occasions); there was John, making as light of it as he could, but explaining at the same time, with most unnecessary elaboration; and here was she, coming towards them, with both of them looking at her, conscious of blushing to a terrible extent, but trying to throw up her eyebrows carelessly, and pout her rosy lips, as if she were the coolest and most unconcerned of little women.

Merrily the fountain plashed and plashed, until the dimples, merging into one another, swelled into a general smile, that covered the whole surface of the basin.

"What an extraordinary meeting!" said Tom. "I should never have dreamed of seeing you two together here."

"Quite accidental," John was heard to murmur.

"Exactly," cried Tom; "that's what I mean, you know. If it wasn't accidental, there would be nothing remarkable in it."

"To be sure," said John.

"Such an out-of-the-way place for you to have met in," pursued Tom, quite delighted.

"Such an unlikely spot!"

John rather disputed that. On the contrary, he considered it a very likely spot, indeed. He was constantly passing to and fro there, he said. He shouldn't wonder if it were to happen again. His only wonder was, that it had never happened before.

By this time Ruth had got round on the farther side of her brother, and had taken his arm. She was squeezing it now, as much as to say, "Are you going to stop here all day, you dear, old, blundering Tom?"

Tom answered the squeeze as if it had been a speech. "John," he said, "if you'll give my sister your arm, we'll take her between us, and walk on. I have a curious circumstance to relate to you. Our meeting could not have happened better."

Merrily the fountain leaped and danced, and merrily the smiling dimples twinkled and expanded more and more, until they broke into a laugh against the basin's rim, and vanished.

"Tom," said his friend, as they turned into the noisy street, "I have a proposition to make. It is, that you and your sister—if she will so far honour a poor bachelor's dwelling—give me a great pleasure, and come and dine with me."

"What, to-day?" cried Tom.

"Yes, to-day. It's close by, you know. Pray, Miss Pinch, insist upon it. It will be very disinterested, for I have nothing to give you."

"Oh! you must not believe that, Ruth," said Tom. "He is the most tremendous fellow, in his housekeeping, that I ever heard of, for a single man. He ought to be Lord Mayor. Well! what do you say? Shall we go?"

"If you please, Tom," rejoined his dutiful little sister.

"But I mean," said Tom, regarding her with smiling admiration: "is there anything you ought to wear, and haven't got? I am sure I don't know, John: she may not be able to take her bonnet off, for anything I can tell."

There was a great deal of laughing at this, and there were divers compliments from John Westlock—not compliments, *he* said at least (and really he was right), but good, plain, honest truths, which no one could deny. Ruth laughed, and all that, but she made no objection; so it was an engagement.

"If I had known it a little sooner," said John, "I would have tried another pudding. Not in rivalry; but merely to exalt that famous one. I wouldn't on any account have had it made with suet."

"Why not?" asked Tom.

"Because that cookery book advises suet,"

said John Westlock; "and ours was made with flour and eggs."

"Oh good gracious!" cried Tom. "Ours was made with flour and eggs, was it? Ha, ha, ha! A beefsteak pudding made with flour and eggs! Why anybody knows better than that. I know better than that! Ha, ha, ha!"

It is unnecessary to say that Tom had been present at the making of the pudding, and had been a devoted believer in it all through. But he was so delighted to have this joke against his busy little sister, and was tickled to that degree at having found her out, that he stopped in Temple Bar to laugh; and it was no more to Tom, that he was anathematised and knocked about by the surly passengers, than it would have been to a post; for he continued to exclaim with unabated good humour, "flour and eggs! a beefsteak pudding made with flour and eggs!" until John Westlock and his sister fairly ran away from him, and left him to have his laugh out by himself; which he had; and then came dodging across the crowded street to them, with such sweet temper and tenderness (it was quite a tender joke of Tom's) beaming in his face, God bless it, that it might have purified the air, though Temple Bar had been, as in the golden days gone by, embellished with a row of rotting human heads.

There are snug chambers in those Inns where the bachelors live, and, for the desolate fellows they pretend to be, it is quite surprising how well they get on. John was very pathetic on the subject of his dreary life, and the deplorable make-shifts and apologetic contrivances it involved; but he really seemed to make himself pretty comfortable. His rooms were the perfection of neatness and convenience at any rate; and if he were anything but comfortable, the fault was certainly not theirs.

He had no sooner ushered Tom and his sister into his best room (where there was a beautiful little vase of fresh flowers on the table, all ready for Ruth. Just as if he had expected her, Tom said), than seizing his hat, he bustled out again, in his most energetically bustling way; and presently came hurrying back, as they saw through the half-opened door, attended by a fiery-faced matron attired in a crunched bonnet, with particularly long strings to it hanging down her back; in conjunction with whom, he instantly began to lay the cloth for dinner, polishing up the wine glasses with his own hands, brightening the silver top of the pepper-castor on his coat-sleeve, drawing corks and filling decanters, with a skill and expedition that were quite dazzling. And as if, in the course of this

rubbing and polishing, he had rubbed an enchanted lamp or a magic ring, obedient to which there were twenty thousand supernatural slaves at least, suddenly there appeared a being in a white waistcoat, carrying under his arm a napkin, and attended by another being with an oblong box upon his head, from which a banquet, piping hot, was taken out and set upon the table.

Salmon, lamb, peas, innocent young potatoes, a cool salad, sliced cucumber, a tender duckling, and a tart—all there. They all came at the right time. Where they came from, didn't appear; but the oblong box was constantly going and coming, and making its arrival known to the man in the white waistcoat by bumping modestly against the outside of the door; for, after its first appearance, it entered the room no more. He was never surprised, this man; he never seemed to wonder at the extraordinary things he found in the box; but took them out with a face expressive of a steady purpose and impenetrable character, and put them on the table. He was a kind man; gentle in his manners, and much interested in what they ate and drank. He was a learned man, and knew the flavour of John Westlock's private sauces, which he softly and feelingly described, as he handed the little bottles round. He was a grave man, and a noiseless; for dinner being done, and wine and fruit arranged upon the board, he vanished, box and all, like something that had never been.

"Didn't I say he was a tremendous fellow in his house-keeping?" cried Tom. "Bless my soul! It's wonderful."

"Ah, Miss Pinch," said John. "This is the bright side of the life we lead in such a place. It would be a dismal life, indeed, if it didn't brighten up to-day."

"Don't believe a word he says," cried Tom. "He lives here like a monarch, and wouldn't change his mode of life for any consideration. He only pretends to grumble."

No, John really did not appear to pretend; for he was uncommonly earnest in his desire to have it understood, that he was as dull, solitary, and uncomfortable on ordinary occasions as an unfortunate young man could, in reason, be. It was a wretched life, he said; a miserable life. He thought of getting rid of the chambers as soon as possible; and meant, in fact, to put a bill up very shortly.

"Well!" said Tom Pinch, "I don't know where you can go, John, to be more comfortable. That's all I can say. What do *you* say, Ruth?"

Ruth trifled with the cherries on her plate,

and said that she thought Mr. Westlock ought to be quite happy, and that she had no doubt he was.

Ah, foolish, panting, frightened little heart, how timidly she said it!

"But you are forgetting what you have to tell, Tom: what occurred this morning," she added in the same breath.

"So I am," said Tom. "We have been so talkative on other topics, that I declare I had not had time to think of it. I'll tell it you at once, John, in case I should forget it altogether."

On Tom's relating what had passed upon the wharf, his friend was very much surprised, and took such a great interest in the narrative as Tom could not quite understand. He believed he knew the old lady whose acquaintance they had made, he said; and that he might venture to say, from their description of her, that her name was Gamp. But of what nature the communication could have been which Tom had borne so unexpectedly; why its delivery had been entrusted to him; how it happened that the parties were involved together; and what secret lay at the bottom of the whole affair; perplexed him very much. Tom had been sure of his taking some interest in the matter; but was not prepared for the strong interest he showed. It held John Westlock to the subject, even after Ruth had left the room; and evidently made him anxious to pursue it further than as a mere subject of conversation.

"I shall remonstrate with my landlord, of course," said Tom: "though he is a very singular, secret sort of man, and not likely to afford me much satisfaction; even if he knew what was in the letter."

"Which you may swear he did," John interposed.

"You think so?"

"I am certain of it."

"Well!" said Tom, "I shall remonstrate with him when I see him (he goes in and out in a strange way, but I will try to catch him to-morrow morning), on his having asked me to execute such an unpleasant commission. And I have been thinking, John, that if I went down to Mrs. What's-her-name's in the City, where I was before, you know—Mrs. Todgers's—to-morrow morning, I might find poor Mercy Pecksniff there, perhaps, and be able to explain to her how I came to have any hand in the business."

"You are perfectly right, Tom," returned his friend, after a short interval of reflection. "You cannot do better. It is quite clear to me that

whatever the business is, there is little good in it; and it is so desirable for you to disentangle yourself from any appearance of wilful connection with it, that I would counsel you to see her husband, if you can, and wash your hands of it by a plain statement of the facts. I have a mis-giving that there is something dark at work here, Tom. I will tell you why, at another time: when I have made an inquiry or two myself."

All this sounded very mysterious to Tom Pinch. But as he knew he could rely upon his friend, he resolved to follow this advice.

Ah, but it would have been a good thing to have had a coat of invisibility, wherein to have watched little Ruth, when she was left to herself in John Westlock's chambers, and John and her brother were talking thus, over their wine! The gentle way in which she tried to get up a little conversation with the fiery-faced matron in the crunched bonnet, who was waiting to attend her; after making a desperate rally in regard of her dress, and attiring herself in a washed-out yellow gown with sprigs of the same upon it, so that it looked like a tessellated work of pats of butter. That would have been pleasant. The grim and griffin-like inflexibility with which the fiery-faced matron repelled these engaging advances, as proceeding from a hostile and dangerous power, who could have no business there, unless it were to deprive her of a customer, or suggest what became of the self-consuming tea and sugar, and other general trifles. That would have been agreeable. The bashful, winning, glorious curiosity, with which little Ruth, when fiery-face was gone, peeped into the books and nick-nacks that were lying about, and had a particular interest in some delicate paper-matches on the chimney-piece: wondering who could have made them. That would have been worth seeing. The faltering hand with which she tied those flowers together; with which, almost blushing at her own fair self as imaged in the glass, she arranged them in her breast, and looking at them with her head aside, now half resolved to take them out again, now half resolved to leave them where they were. That would have been delightful!

John seemed to think it all delightful: for coming in with Tom to tea, he took his seat beside her like a man enchanted. And when the tea-service had been removed, and Tom, sitting down at the piano, became absorbed in some of his old organ tunes, he was still beside her at the open window, looking out upon the twilight.

There is little enough to see in Furnival's Inn. It is a shady, quiet place, echoing to the foot-

steps of the stragglers who have business there; and rather monotonous and gloomy on summer evenings. What gave it such a charm to them, that they remained at the window as unconscious of the flight of time as Tom himself, the dreamer, while the melodies which had so often soothed his spirit, were hovering again about him! What power infused into the fading light, the gathering darkness; the stars that here and there appeared; the evening air, the City's hum and stir, the very chiming of the old church clocks; such exquisite enthrallment, that the divinest regions of the earth spread out before their eyes could not have held them captive in a stronger chain!

The shadows deepened, deepened, and the room became quite dark. Still Tom's fingers wandered over the keys of the piano; and still the window had its pair of tenants.

At length, her hand upon his shoulder, and her breath upon his forehead, roused Tom from his reverie.

"Dear me!" he cried, desisting with a start. "I am afraid I have been very inconsiderate and unpolite."

Tom little thought how much consideration and politeness he had shown!

"Sing something to us, my dear," said Tom. "Let us hear your voice. Come!"

John Westlock added his entreaties, with such earnestness that a flinty heart alone could have resisted them. Hers was not a flinty heart. Oh dear no! Quite another thing.

So down she sat, and in a pleasant voice began to sing the ballads Tom loved well. Old rhyming stories, with here and there a pause for a few simple chords, such as a harper might have sounded in the ancient time while looking upward for the current of some half-remembered legend; words of old poets, wedded to such measures that the strain of music might have been the poet's breath, giving utterance and expression to his thoughts; and now a melody so joyous and light-hearted, that the singer seemed incapable of sadness, until in her inconstancy (oh wicked little singer!) she relapsed, and broke the listeners' hearts again: these were the simple means she used to please them. And that these simple means prevailed, and she *did* please them, let the still darkened chamber, and its long-deferred illumination witness!

The candles came at last, and it was time for moving homeward. Cutting paper carefully, and rolling it about the stalks of those same flowers, occasioned some delay; but even this was done in time, and Ruth was ready.

"Good night!" said Tom. "A memorable and delightful visit, John! Good night!"

John thought he would walk with them.

"No, no. Don't!" said Tom. "What nonsense! We can get home very well alone. I couldn't think of taking you out."

But John said he would rather.

"Are you sure you would rather?" said Tom. "I am afraid you only say so out of politeness."

John being quite sure, gave his arm to Ruth, and led her out. Fiery-face, who was again in attendance, acknowledged her departure with so cold a curtsey that it was hardly visible; and cut Tom, dead.

Their host was bent on walking the whole distance, and would not listen to Tom's dissuasions. Happy time, happy walk, happy parting, happy dreams! But there are some sweet day-dreams, so there are, that put the visions of the night to shame.

Busily the Temple fountain murmured in the moonlight, while Ruth lay sleeping, with her flowers beside her; and John Westlock sketched a portrait—whose?—from memory.

CHAPTER XLVI.

IN WHICH MISS PECKSNIFF MAKES LOVE, MR. JONAS MAKES WRATH, MRS. GAMP MAKES TEA, AND MR. CHUFFEY MAKES BUSINESS.



ON the next day's official duties coming to a close, Tom hurried home without losing any time by the way; and, after dinner and a short rest, sallied out again, accompanied by Ruth, to pay his projected visit to 'Todgers's. Tom took Ruth with him, not only because it was a great pleasure to him to have her for his companion whenever he could, but because he wished her to cherish and comfort poor Merry; which she, for her own part (having heard the wretched history of that young wife from Tom), was all eagerness to do.

"She was so glad to see me," said Tom, "that I am sure she will be glad to see you. Your sympathy is certain to be much more delicate and acceptable than mine."

"I am very far from being certain of that, Tom," she replied; "and indeed you do yourself an injustice. Indeed you do. But I hope she may like me, Tom."

"Oh, she is sure to do that!" cried Tom, confidently.

"What a number of friends I should have, if everybody was of your way of thinking.

Shouldn't I, Tom, dear?" said his little sister, pinching him upon the cheek.

Tom laughed, and said that with reference to this particular case he had no doubt at all of finding a disciple in Merry. "For you women," said Tom, "you women, my dear, are so kind, and in your kindness have such nice perception; you know so well how to be affectionate and full of solicitude without appearing to be; your gentleness of feeling is like your touch: so light and easy, that the one enables you to deal with wounds of the mind as tenderly as the other enables you to deal with wounds of the body. You are such——"

"My goodness, Tom!" his sister interposed. "You ought to fall in love immediately."

Tom put this observation off good-humouredly, but somewhat gravely too; and they were soon very chatty again on some other subject.

As they were passing through a street in the City, not very far from Mrs. Todgers's place of residence, Ruth checked Tom before the window of a large Upholstery and Furniture Warehouse, to call his attention to something very magnificent and ingenious, displayed there to the best advantage, for the admiration and temptation of the public. Tom had hazarded some most erroneous and extravagantly wrong guess in relation to the price of this article, and had joined his sister in laughing heartily at his mistake, when he pressed her arm in his, and pointed to two persons at a little distance, who were looking in at the same window with a deep interest in the chests of drawers and tables.

"Hush!" Tom whispered. "Miss Pecksniff, and the young gentleman to whom she is going to be married."

"Why does he look as if he was going to be buried, Tom?" inquired his little sister.

"Why, he is naturally a dismal young gentleman, I believe," said Tom: "but he is very civil and inoffensive."

"I suppose they are furnishing their house," whispered Ruth.

"Yes, I suppose they are," replied Tom. "We had better avoid speaking to them."

They could not very well avoid looking at them, however, especially as some obstruction on the pavement, at a little distance, happened to detain them where they were for a few moments. Miss Pecksniff had quite the air of having taken the unhappy Moddle captive, and brought him up to the contemplation of the furniture like a lamb to the altar. He offered no resistance, but was perfectly resigned and quiet. The melancholy depicted in the turn of

his languishing head, and in his dejected attitude, was extreme; and though there was a full-sized four-post bedstead in the window, such a tear stood trembling in his eye, as seemed to blot it out.

"Augustus, my love," said Miss Pecksniff, "ask the price of the eight rosewood chairs, and the loo table."

"Perhaps they are ordered already," said Augustus. "Perhaps they are Another's."

"They can make more like them, if they are," rejoined Miss Pecksniff.

"No, no, they can't," said Moddle. "It's impossible!"

He appeared, for the moment, to be quite overwhelmed and stupefied by the prospect of his approaching happiness; but recovering, entered the shop. He returned immediately: saying in a tone of despair,

"Twenty-four pound ten!"



MR. MODDLE, WITH A DARK LOOK, REPLIED: "THE DRIVERS WON'T DO IT."

Miss Pecksniff, turning to receive this announcement, became conscious of the observation of Tom Pinch and his sister.

"Oh, really!" cried Miss Pecksniff, glancing about her, as if for some convenient means of sinking into the earth. "Upon my word, I—there never was such a—to think that one should be so very—Mr. Augustus Moddle, Miss Pinch!"

Miss Pecksniff was quite gracious to Miss Pinch in this triumphant introduction; exceedingly gracious. She was more than gracious;

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she was kind and cordial. Whether the recollection of the old service Tom had rendered her in knocking Mr. Jonas on the head, had wrought this change in her opinions; or whether her separation from her parent had reconciled her to all human-kind, or to all that increasing portion of human-kind which was not friendly to him; or whether the delight of having some new female acquaintance to whom to communicate her interesting prospects, was paramount to every other consideration; cordial and kind Miss Pecksniff was.

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And twice Miss Pecksniff kissed Miss Pinch upon the cheek.

"Augustus—Mr. Pinch, you know. My dear girl!" said Miss Pecksniff, aside. "I never was so ashamed in my life."

Ruth begged her not to think of it.

"I mind your brother less than anybody else," simpered Miss Pecksniff. "But the delicacy of meeting any gentleman under such circumstances! Augustus, my child, did you——"

Here Miss Pecksniff whispered in his ear. The suffering Moddle repeated:

"Twenty-four pound ten!"

"Oh, you silly man! I don't mean them," said Miss Pecksniff. "I am speaking of the——"

Here she whispered him again.

"If it's the same patterned chintz as that in the window; thirty-two, twelve, six," said Moddle, with a sigh. "And very dear."

Miss Pecksniff stopped him from giving any further explanation by laying her hand upon his lips, and betraying a soft embarrassment. She then asked Tom Pinch which way he was going.

"I was going to see if I could find your sister," answered Tom, "to whom I wished to say a few words. We were going to Mrs. Todgers's, where I had the pleasure of seeing her before."

"It's of no use your going on, then," said Cherry, "for we have not long left there; and I know she is not at home. But I'll take you to my sister's house, if you please. Augustus—Mr. Moddle, I mean—and myself, are on our way to tea there, now. You needn't think of *him*," she added, nodding her head, as she observed some hesitation on Tom's part. "He is not at home."

"Are you sure?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I am quite sure of that. I don't want any *more* revenge," said Miss Pecksniff, expressively. "But, really, I must beg you two gentlemen to walk on, and allow me to follow with Miss Pinch. My dear, I never was so taken by surprise!"

In furtherance of this bashful arrangement, Moddle gave his arm to Tom; and Miss Pecksniff linked her own in Ruth's.

"Of course, my love," said Miss Pecksniff, "it would be useless for me to disguise, after what you have seen, that I am about to be united to the gentleman who is walking with your brother. It would be in vain to conceal it. What do you think of him? Pray, let me have your candid opinion."

Ruth intimated that, as far as she could judge, he was a very eligible swain.

"I am curious to know," said Miss Pecksniff, with loquacious frankness, "whether you have observed, or fancied, in this very short space of time, that he is of a rather melancholy turn?"

"So very short a time," Ruth pleaded.

"No, no; but don't let that interfere with your answer," returned Miss Pecksniff. "I am curious to hear what you say."

Ruth acknowledged that he had impressed her at first sight as looking "rather low."

"No, really?" said Miss Pecksniff. "Well! that is quite remarkable! Everybody says the same. Mrs. Todgers says the same; and Augustus informs me that it is quite a joke among the gentlemen in the house. Indeed, but for the positive commands I have laid upon him, I believe it would have been the occasion of loaded fire-arms being resorted to more than once. What do you think is the cause of his appearance of depression?"

Ruth thought of several things; such as his digestion, his tailor, his mother, and the like. But hesitating to give utterance to any one of them, she refrained from expressing an opinion.

"My dear," said Miss Pecksniff; "I shouldn't wish it to be known, but I don't mind mentioning it to you, having known your brother for so many years—I refused Augustus three times. He is of a most amiable and sensitive nature; always ready to shed tears, if you look at him, which is extremely charming; and he has never recovered the effect of that cruelty. For it *was* cruel," said Miss Pecksniff, with a self-convicting candour that might have adorned the diadem of her own papa. "There is no doubt of it. I look back upon my conduct now with blushes. I always liked him. I felt that he was not to me what the crowd of young men who had made proposals had been, but something very different. Then what right had I to refuse him three times?"

"It was a severe trial of his fidelity, no doubt," said Ruth.

"My dear," returned Miss Pecksniff, "it was wrong. But such is the caprice and thoughtlessness of our sex! Let me be a warning to you. Don't try the feelings of any one who makes you an offer, as I have tried the feelings of Augustus; but if you ever feel towards a person as I really felt towards him, at the very time when I was driving him to distraction, let that feeling find expression, if that person throws himself at your feet, as Augustus Moddle did at mine. Think," said Miss Pecksniff, "what my feelings would have been, if I had goaded him to suicide, and it had got into the papers!"

Ruth observed that she would have been full of remorse, no doubt.

"Remorse!" cried Miss Pecksniff, in a sort of snug and comfortable penitence. "What my remorse is at this moment, even after making reparation by accepting him, it would be impossible to tell you! Looking back upon my giddy self, my dear, now that I am sobered down and made thoughtful, by treading on the very brink of matrimony; and contemplating myself as I was when I was like what you are now; I shudder. I shudder. What is the consequence of my past conduct? Until Augustus leads me to the altar, he is not sure of me. I have blighted and withered the affections of his heart to that extent that he is not sure of me. I see that, preying on his mind and feeding on his vitals. What are the reproaches of my conscience, when I see this in the man I love!"

Ruth endeavoured to express some sense of her unbounded and flattering confidence; and presumed that she was going to be married soon.

"Very soon indeed," returned Miss Pecksniff. "As soon as our house is ready. We are furnishing now as fast as we can."

In the same vein of confidence, Miss Pecksniff ran through a general inventory of the articles that were already bought, with the articles that remained to be purchased; what garments she intended to be married in, and where the ceremony was to be performed; and gave Miss Pinch, in short (as she told her), early and exclusive information on all points of interest connected with the event.

While this was going forward in the rear, Tom and Mr. Moddle walked on, arm in arm, in the front, in a state of profound silence, which Tom at last broke: after thinking for a long time what he could say that should refer to an indifferent topic, in respect of which he might rely, with some degree of certainty, on Mr. Moddle's bosom being unruffled.

"I wonder," said Tom, "that in these crowded streets, the foot-passengers are not oftener run over."

Mr. Moddle, with a dark look, replied:

"The drivers won't do it."

"Do you mean?" Tom began—

"That there are some men," interrupted Moddle, with a hollow laugh, "who can't get run over. They live a charmed life. Coal waggons recoil from them, and even cabs refuse to run them down. Ay!" said Augustus, marking Tom's astonishment. "There are such men. One of 'em is a friend of mine."

"Upon my word and honour," thought Tom, "this young gentleman is in a state of mind

which is very serious indeed!" Abandoning all idea of conversation, he did not venture to say another word; but he was careful to keep a tight hold upon Augustus's arm, lest he should fly into the road, and making another, and a more successful attempt, should get up a private little Juggernaut before the eyes of his betrothed. Tom was so afraid of his committing this rash act, that he had scarcely ever experienced such mental relief as when they arrived in safety at Mrs. Jonas Chuzzlewit's house.

"Walk up, pray, Mr. Pinch," said Miss Pecksniff. For Tom halted, irresolutely, at the door.

"I am doubtful whether I should be welcome," replied Tom, "or, I ought rather to say, I have no doubt about it. I will send up a message, I think."

"But what nonsense that is!" returned Miss Pecksniff, speaking apart to Tom. "He is not at home, I am certain; I know he is not; and Merry hasn't the least idea that you ever—"

"No," interrupted Tom. "Nor would I have her know it, on any account. I am not so proud of that scuffle, I assure you."

"Ah, but then you are so modest, you see," returned Miss Pecksniff, with a smile. "But pray walk up. If you don't wish her to know it, and do wish to speak to her, pray walk up. Pray walk up, Miss Pinch. Don't stand here."

Tom still hesitated; for he felt that he was in an awkward position. But Cherry passing him at this juncture, and leading his sister up-stairs, and the house-door being at the same time shut behind them, he followed without quite knowing whether it was well or ill-judged so to do.

"Merry, my darling!" said the fair Miss Pecksniff, opening the door of the usual sitting-room. "Here are Mr. Pinch and his sister come to see you! I thought we should find you here, Mrs. Todgers! How do you do, Mrs. Gamp? And how do you do, Mr. Chuffey, though it's of no use asking you the question, I am well aware."

Honouring each of these parties, as she severally addressed them, with an acid smile; Miss Charity presented Mr. Moddle.

"I believe you have seen *him* before," she pleasantly observed. "Augustus, my sweet child, bring me a chair."

The sweet child did as he was told; and was then about to retire into a corner to mourn in secret, when Miss Charity, calling him in an audible whisper a "little pet," gave him leave to come and sit beside her. It is to be hoped, for the general cheerfulness of mankind, that such a doleful little pet was never seen as Mr. Moddle looked when he complied. So despondent was his temper, that he showed no outward thrill of

ecstasy, when Miss Pecksniff placed her lily hand in his, and concealed this mark of her favour from the vulgar gaze, by covering it with the corner of her shawl. Indeed, he was infinitely more rueful than he had been before; and, sitting uncomfortably upright in his chair, surveyed the company with watery eyes, which seemed to say, without the aid of language, "Oh, good gracious! look here! Won't some kind Christian help me!"

But the ecstasies of Mrs. Gamp were sufficient to have furnished forth a score of young lovers; and they were chiefly awakened by the sight of Tom Pinch and his sister. Mrs. Gamp was a lady of that happy temperament which can be ecstatic without any other stimulating cause than a general desire to establish a large and profitable connection. She added daily so many strings to her bow, that she made a perfect harp of it; and upon that instrument she now began to perform an extemporaneous concerto.

"Why, goodness me!" she said, "Mrs. Chuzzlewit! To think as I should see beneath this blessed ouse, which well I know it, Miss Pecksniff, my sweet young lady, to be a ouse as there is not a many like, worse luck and wishin' it ware not so, which then this tearful walley would be changed into a flowerin' guardian, Mr. Chuffey; to think as I should see beneath this indiwidgle roof, identically comin', Mr. Pinch (I take the liberty, though almost unbeknown), and do assure you of it, sir, the smilinst and sweetest face as ever, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, I see, exceptin' yourn, my dear good lady, and *your* good lady's too, sir, Mr. Moddle, if I may make so bold as speak so plain of what is plain enough to them as needn't look through millstones, Mrs. Todgers, to find out wot is wrote upon the wall behind. Which no offence is meant, ladies and gentlemen; none bein' took, I hope. To think as I should see that smilinst and sweetest face which me and another friend of mine, took notige of among the packages down London Bridge, in this promiscuous place, is a surprige in-deed!"

Having contrived, in this happy manner, to invest every member of her audience with an individual share and immediate personal interest in her address, Mrs. Gamp dropped several curtseys to Ruth, and smilingly shaking her head a great many times, pursued the thread of her discourse.

"Now, ain't we rich in beauty this here joyful artemoon, I'm sure. I knows a lady, which her name, I'll not deceive you, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, is Harris, her husband's brother bein' six foot three, and marked with a mad bull in Wellington boots upon his left arm, on account of his precious

mother havin' been worried by one into a shoemaker's shop, when in a sitiuation which blessed is the man as has his quiver full of sech, as many times I've said to Gamp when words has roge betwix us on account of the expense—and often have I said to Mrs. Harris, 'Oh, Mrs. Harris, ma'am! your countenance is quite a angel's!' Which, but for Pimples, it would be. 'No, Sairey Gamp,' says she, 'you best of hard-working and industrious crecturs as ever was underpaid at any price, which underpaid you are, quite diff'rent. Harris had it done afore marriage at ten and six,' she says, 'and wore it faithful next his heart 'till the colour run, when the money was declined to be give back, and no arrangement could be come to. But he never said it was a angel's, Sairey, wotever he might have thought.' If Mrs. Harris's husband was here now," said Mrs. Gamp, looking round, and chuckling as she dropped a general curtsey, "he'd speak out plain, he would, and his dear wife would be the last to blame him! For if ever a woman lived as know'd not wot it was to form a wish to pizon them as had good looks, and had no reagon give her by the best of husbands, Mrs. Harris is that ev'nly dispoician!"

With these words the worthy woman, who appeared to have dropped in to take tea as a delicate little attention, rather than to have any engagement on the premises in an official capacity, crossed to Mr. Chuffey, who was seated in the same corner as of old, and shook him by the shoulder.

"Rouge yourself and look up! Come!" said Mrs. Gamp. "Here's company, Mr. Chuffey."

"I'm sorry for it," cried the old man, looking humbly round the room. "I know I'm in the way. I ask pardon, but I've nowhere else to go. Where is she?"

Merry went to him.

"Ah!" said the old man, patting her on the cheek. "Here she is. Here she is! She's never hard on poor old Chuffey. Poor old Chuff!"

As she took her seat upon a low chair by the old man's side, and put herself within the reach of his hand, she looked up once at Tom. It was a sad look that she cast upon him, though there was a faint smile trembling on her face. It was a speaking look, and Tom knew what it said. "You see how misery has changed me. I can feel for a dependant *now*, and set some value on his attachment."

"Ay, ay!" cried Chuffey in a soothing tone. "Ay, ay, ay! Never mind him. It's hard to bear, but never mind him. He'll die one day. There are three hundred and sixty-five days in

the year—three hundred and sixty-six in leap year—and he may die on any one of 'em."

"You're a wearing old soul, and that's the sacred truth," said Mrs. Gamp, contemplating him from a little distance with anything but favour, as he continued to mutter to himself. "It's a pity that you don't know wot you say, for you'd tire your own patience out if you did, and fret yourself into a happy relage for all as knows you."

"His son," murmured the old man, lifting up his hand. "His son!"

"Well I'm sure!" said Mrs. Gamp, "you're a settlin' of it, Mr. Chuffey. To your satigefaction, sir, I hope. But I wouldn't lay a new pin-cushion on it myself, sir, though you *are* so well informed. Drat the old creetur, he's a layin' down the law tolerable confident, too! A deal he knows of sons! or darters either! Suppose you was to favour us with some remarks on twins, sir, *would* you be so good!"

The bitter and indignant sarcasm which Mrs. Gamp conveyed into these taunts was altogether lost on the unconscious Chuffey, who appeared to be as little cognizant of their delivery as of his having given Mrs. Gamp offence. But that high-minded woman, being sensitively alive to any invasion of her professional province, and imagining that Mr. Chuffey had given utterance to some prediction on the subject of sons, which ought to have emanated in the first instance from herself as the only lawful authority, or which should at least have been on no account proclaimed without her sanction and concurrence, was not so easily appeased. She continued to sidle at Mr. Chuffey with looks of sharp hostility, and to defy him with many other ironical remarks, uttered in that low key which commonly denotes suppressed indignation; until the entrance of the tea-board, and a request from Mrs. Jonas that she would make tea at a side-table for the party that had unexpectedly assembled, restored her to herself. She smiled again, and entered on her ministrations with her own particular urbanity.

"And quite a family it is to make tea for," said Mrs. Gamp; "and wot a happiness to do it! My good young 'ooman"—to the servant-girl—"p'raps somebody would like to try a new-laid egg or two, not biled too hard. Likeways, a few rounds o' buttered toast, first cuttin' off the crust, in consequence of tender teeth, and not too many of 'em; which Gamp himself, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, at one blow, being in liquor, struck out four, two single and two double, as was took by Mrs. Harris for a keepsake, and is carried in her pocket at this present hour, along with two

cramp-bones, a bit o' ginger, and a grater like a blessed infant's shoe, in tin, with a little heel to put the nutmeg in: as many times I've seen and said, and used for caudle when required, within the month."

As the privileges of the side-table—besides including the small prerogatives of sitting next the toast, and taking two cups of tea to other people's one, and always taking them at a crisis, that is to say, before putting fresh water into the tea-pot, and after it had been standing for some time—also comprehended a full view of the company, and an opportunity of addressing them as from a rostrum, Mrs. Gamp discharged the functions entrusted to her with extreme good-humour and affability. Sometimes, resting her saucer on the palm of her outspread hand, and supporting her elbow on the table, she stopped between her sips of tea to favour the circle with a smile, a wink, a roll of the head, or some other mark of notice; and at those periods, her countenance was lighted up with a degree of intelligence and vivacity, which it was almost impossible to separate from the benignant influence of distilled waters.

But for Mrs. Gamp, it would have been a curiously silent party. Miss Pecksniff only spoke to her Augustus, and to him in whispers. Augustus spoke to nobody, but sighed for every one, and occasionally gave himself such a sounding slap upon the forehead as would make Mrs. Todgers, who was rather nervous, start in her chair with an involuntary exclamation. Mrs. Todgers was occupied in knitting, and seldom spoke. Poor Merry held the hand of cheerful little Ruth between her own, and listening with evident pleasure to all she said, but rarely speaking herself, sometimes smiled, and sometimes kissed her on the cheek, and sometimes turned aside to hide the tears that trembled in her eyes. Tom felt this change in her so much, and was so glad to see how tenderly Ruth dealt with her, and how she knew and answered to it, that he had not the heart to make any movement towards their departure, although he had long since given utterance to all he came to say.

The old clerk, subsiding into his usual state, remained profoundly silent, while the rest of the little assembly were thus occupied, intent upon the dreams, whatever they might be, which hardly seemed to stir the surface of his sluggish thoughts. The bent of these dull fancies combining probably with the silent feasting that was going on about him, and some struggling recollection of the last approach to revelry he had witnessed, suggested a strange question to his mind. He looked round upon a sudden, and said,

"Who's lying dead up-stairs?"

"No one," said Merry, turning to him. "What is the matter? We are all here."

"All here!" cried the old man. "All here! Where is he then—my old master, Mr. Chuzzlewit, who had the only son? Where is he?"

"Hush! Hush!" said Merry, speaking kindly to him. "That happened long ago. Don't you recollect?"

"Recollect!" rejoined the old man, with a cry of grief. "As if I could forget! As if I ever could forget!"

He put his hand up to his face for a moment; and then repeated, turning round exactly as before,

"Who's lying dead up-stairs?"

"No one!" said Merry.

At first he gazed angrily upon her, as upon a stranger who endeavoured to deceive him; but, peering into her face, and seeing that it was indeed she, he shook his head in sorrowful compassion.

"You think not. But they don't tell you. No, no, poor thing! They don't tell you. Who are these, and why are they merry-making here, if there is no one dead? Foul play! Go see who it is!"

She made a sign to them not to speak to him, which indeed they had little inclination to do; and remained silent herself. So did he for a short time; but then he repeated the same question with an eagerness that had a peculiar terror in it.

"There's some one dead," he said, "or dying; and I want to know who it is. Go see, go see! Where's Jonas?"

"In the country," she replied.

The old man gazed at her as if he doubted what she said, or had not heard her; and, rising from his chair, walked across the room and up-stairs, whispering as he went, "Foul play!" They heard his footsteps overhead, going up into that corner of the room in which the bed stood (it was there old Anthony had died); and then they heard him coming down again immediately. His fancy was not so strong or wild that it pictured to him anything in the deserted bed-chamber which was not there; for he returned much calmer, and appeared to have satisfied himself.

"They don't tell you," he said to Merry in his quavering voice, as he sat down again, and patted her upon the head. "They don't tell me either; but I'll watch, I'll watch. They shall not hurt you; don't be frightened. When you have sat up watching, I have sat up watching too. Ay, ay, I have!" he piped out, clench-

ing his weak, shrivelled hand. Many a night I have been ready!"

He said this with such trembling gaps and pauses in his want of breath, and said it in his jealous secrecy so closely in her ear, that little or nothing of it was understood by the visitors. But they had heard and seen enough of the old man to be disquieted, and to have left their seats and gathered about him; thereby affording Mrs. Gamp, whose professional coolness was not so easily disturbed, an eligible opportunity for concentrating the whole resources of her powerful mind and appetite upon the toast and butter, tea and eggs. She had brought them to bear upon those viands with such vigour that her face was in the highest state of inflammation, when she now (there being nothing left to eat or drink) saw fit to interpose.

"Why, highy tighty, sir!" cried Mrs. Gamp, "is these your manners? You want a pitcher of cold water throw'd over you to bring you round; that's my belief; and if you was under Betsey Prig you'd have it, too, I do assure you, Mr. Chuffey. Spanish Flies is the only thing to draw this nonsense out of you; and if anybody wanted to do you a kindness, they'd clap a blister of 'em on your head, and put a mustard poultice on your back. Who's dead, indeed! It wouldn't be no grievous loss if some one was, I think!"

"He's quiet now, Mrs. Gamp," said Merry. "Don't disturb him."

"Oh, bother the old wictim, Mrs. Chuzzlewit," replied that zealous lady, "I ain't no patience with him. You give him his own way too much by half. A worritin' wexagious creetur!"

No doubt with the view of carrying out the precepts she enforced, and "Lothering the old victim" in practice as well as in theory, Mrs. Gamp took him by the collar of his coat, and gave him some dozen or two of hearty shakes backward and forward in his chair; that exercise being considered by the disciples of the Prig school of nursing (who are very numerous among professional ladies) as exceedingly conducive to repose, and highly beneficial to the performance of the nervous functions. Its effect in this instance was to render the patient so giddy and addle-headed, that he could say nothing more; which Mrs. Gamp regarded as the triumph of her art.

"There!" she said, loosening the old man's cravat, in consequence of his being rather black in the face, after this scientific treatment. "Now, I hope, you're easy in your mind. If you should turn at all faint, we can soon revive you, sir, I

promige you. Bite a person's thumbs, or turn their fingers the wrong way," said Mrs. Gamp, smiling with the consciousness of at once imparting pleasure and instruction to her auditors, "and they comes to wonderful, Lord bless you!"

As this excellent woman had been formerly entrusted with the care of Mr. Chuffey on a previous occasion, neither Mrs. Jonas nor anybody else had the resolution to interfere directly with her mode of treatment: though all present (Tom Pinch and his sister especially) appeared to be disposed to differ from her views. For such is the rash boldness of the uninitiated, that they will frequently set up some monstrous abstract principle, such as humanity, or tenderness, or the like idle folly, in obstinate defiance of all precedent and usage; and will even venture to maintain the same against the persons who have made the precedents and established the usage, and who must therefore be the best and most impartial judges of the subject.

"Ah, Mr. Pinch!" said Miss Pecksniff. "It all comes of this unfortunate marriage. If my sister had not been so precipitate, and had not united herself to a Wretch, there would have been no Mr. Chuffey in the house."

"Hush!" cried Tom. "She'll hear you."

"I should be very sorry if she did hear me, Mr. Pinch," said Cherry, raising her voice a little: "for it is not in my nature to add to the uneasiness of any person: far less of my own sister. I know what a sister's duties are, Mr. Pinch, and I hope I always showed it in my practice. Augustus, my dear child, find my pocket-handkerchief, and give it to me."

Augustus obeyed, and took Mrs. Todgers aside to pour his griefs into her friendly bosom.

"I am sure, Mr. Pinch," said Charity, looking after her betrothed and glancing at her sister, "that I ought to be very grateful for the blessings I enjoy, and those which are yet in store for me. When I contrast Augustus"—here she was modest and embarrassed—"who, I don't mind saying to you, is all softness, mildness, and devotion, with the detestable man who is my sister's husband; and when I think, Mr. Pinch, that in the dispensations of this world, our cases might have been reversed; I have much to be thankful for, indeed, and much to make me humble and contented."

Contented she might have been, but humble she assuredly was not. Her face and manner experienced something so widely different from humility, that Tom could not help understanding and despising the base motives that were working in her breast. He turned away, and said to Ruth, that it was time for them to go.

"I will write to your husband," said Tom to Merry, "and explain to him, as I would have done if I had met him here, that if he has sustained any inconvenience through my means, it is not my fault: a postman not being more innocent of the news he brings than I was when I handed him that letter."

"I thank you!" said Merry. "It may do some good."

She parted tenderly from Ruth, who with her brother was in the act of leaving the room, when a key was heard in the lock of the door below, and immediately afterwards a quick footstep in the passage. Tom stopped, and looked at Merry.

It was Jonas, she said timidly.

"I had better not meet him on the stairs, perhaps," said Tom, drawing his sister's arm through his, and coming back a step or two. "I'll wait for him here, a moment."

He had scarcely said it, when the door opened, and Jonas entered. His wife came forward to receive him; but he put her aside with his hand, and said in a surly tone:

"I didn't know you'd got a party."

As he looked, at the same time, either by accident or design, towards Miss Pecksniff; and as Miss Pecksniff was only too delighted to quarrel with him, she instantly resented it.

"Oh dear!" she said, rising. "Pray don't let us intrude upon your domestic happiness! That would be a pity. We have taken tea here, sir, in your absence; but if you will have the goodness to send us a note of the expense, receipted, we shall be happy to pay it. Augustus, my love, we will go, if you please. Mrs. Todgers, unless you wish to remain here, we shall be happy to take you with us. It would be a pity, indeed, to spoil the bliss which this gentleman always brings with him: especially into his own home."

"Charity! Charity!" remonstrated her sister, in such a heartfelt tone that she might have been imploring her to show the cardinal virtue whose name she bore.

"Merry, my dear, I am much obliged to you for your advice," returned Miss Pecksniff, with a stately scorn; by the way, she had not been offered any: "but I am not his slave——"

"No, nor wouldn't have been if you could," interrupted Jonas. "We know all about it."

"What did you say, sir?" cried Miss Pecksniff, sharply.

"Didn't you hear?" retorted Jonas, lounging down upon a chair. "I am not a-going to say it again. If you like to stay, you may stay. If you like to go, you may go. But if you stay, please to be civil."

"Beast!" cried Miss Pecksniff, sweeping past him. "Augustus! He is beneath your notice!" Augustus had been making some faint and sickly demonstration of shaking his fist. "Come away, child," screamed Miss Pecksniff, "I command you!"

The scream was elicited from her by Augustus manifesting an intention to return and grapple with him. But Miss Pecksniff giving the fiery youth a pull, and Mrs. Todgers giving him a push, they all three tumbled out of the room together, to the music of Miss Pecksniff's shrill remonstrances.

All this time, Jonas had seen nothing of Tom and his sister; for they were almost behind the door when he opened it, and he had sat down with his back towards them, and had purposely kept his eyes upon the opposite side of the street during his altercation with Miss Pecksniff, in order that his seeming carelessness might increase the exasperation of that wronged young damsel. His wife now faltered out that Tom had been waiting to see him; and Tom advanced.

The instant he presented himself, Jonas got up from his chair, and swearing a great oath, caught it in his grasp, as if he would have felled Tom to the ground with it. As he most unquestionably would have done, but that his very passion and surprise made him irresolute, and gave Tom, in his calmness, an opportunity of being heard.

"You have no cause to be violent, sir," said Tom. "Though what I wish to say relates to your own affairs, I know nothing of them, and desire to know nothing of them."

Jonas was too enraged to speak. He held the door open; and stamping his foot upon the ground, motioned Tom away.

"As you cannot suppose," said Tom, "that I am here with any view of conciliating you or pleasing myself, I am quite indifferent to your reception of me, or your dismissal of me. Hear what I have to say, if you are not a madman! I gave you a letter the other day, when you were about to go abroad."

"You Thief, you did!" retorted Jonas. "I'll pay you for the carriage of it one day, and settle an old score besides. I will."

"Tut, tut," said Tom. "You needn't waste words or threats. I wish you to understand—plainly because I would rather keep clear of you and everything that concerns you: not because I have the least apprehension of your doing me any injury: which would be weak indeed—that I am no party to the contents of that letter. That I know nothing of it. That I was not even aware that it was to be delivered to you; and that I had it from——"

"By the Lord!" cried Jonas, fiercely catching up the chair. "I'll knock your brains out, if you speak another word."

Tom, nevertheless, persisting in his intention, and opening his lips to speak again, Jonas set upon him like a savage; and in the quickness and ferocity of his attack would have surely done him some grievous injury, defenceless as he was, and embarrassed by having his frightened sister clinging to his arm, if Merry had not run between them, crying to Tom for the love of Heaven to leave the house. The agony of this poor creature, the terror of his sister, the impossibility of making himself audible, and the equal impossibility of bearing up against Mrs. Gamp, who threw herself upon him like a feather-bed, and forced him backwards down the stairs by the mere oppression of her dead-weight, prevailed. Tom shook the dust of that house off his feet, without having mentioned Nadgett's name.

If the name could have passed his lips; if Jonas, in the insolence of his vile nature, had never roused him to do that old act of manliness, for which (and not for his last offence) he hated him with such malignity: if Jonas could have learned, as then he could and would have learned, through Tom's means, what unsuspected spy there was upon him; he would have been saved from the commission of a Guilty Deed, then drawing on towards its black accomplishment. But the fatality was of his own working; the pit was of his own digging; the gloom that gathered round him, was the shadow of his own life.

His wife had closed the door, and thrown herself before it, on the ground, upon her knees. She held up her hands to him now, and besought him not to be harsh with her, for she had interposed in fear of bloodshed.

"So, so!" said Jonas, looking down upon her, as he fetched his breath. "These are your friends, are they, when I am away? You plot and tamper with this sort of people, do you?"

"No, indeed! I have no knowledge of these secrets, and no clue to their meaning. I have never seen him since I left home but once—but twice—before to-day."

"Oh!" sneered Jonas, catching at this correction. "But once, but twice, eh? Which do you mean? Twice and once, perhaps. Three times! How many more, you lying jade?"

As he made an angry motion with his hand, she shrunk down hastily. A suggestive action! Full of a cruel truth!

"How many more times?" he repeated.

"No more. The other morning, and to-day, and once besides."

He was about to retort upon her, when the

clock struck. He started, stopped, and listened: appearing to revert to some engagement, or to some other subject, a secret within his own breast, recalled to him by this record of the progress of the hours.

"Don't lie there. Get up!"

Having helped her to rise, or rather hauled her up by the arm, he went on to say:

"Listen to me, young lady; and don't whine when you have no occasion, or I may make some for you. If I find him in my house again, or find that you have seen him in anybody else's house, you'll repent it. If you are not deaf and

dumb to everything that concerns me, unless you have my leave to hear and speak, you'll repent it. If you don't obey exactly what I order, you'll repent it. Now, attend. What's the time?"

"It struck Eight a minute ago."

He looked towards her intently; and said, with a laboured distinctness, as if he had got the words off by heart:

"I have been travelling day and night, and am tired. I have lost some money, and that don't improve me. Put my supper in the little off-room below, and have the truckle-bed made. I shall sleep there to-night, and maybe to-mor-



MRS. GAMP FAVOURS THE COMPANY WITH AN EXHIBITION OF PROFESSIONAL SKILL.

row night; and if I can sleep all day to-morrow, so much the better, for I've got trouble to sleep off, if I can. Keep the house quiet, and don't call me. Mind! Don't call me. Don't let anybody call me. Let me lie there."

She said it should be done. Was that all?

"What! you must be prying and questioning?" he angrily retorted. "What more do you want to know?"

"I want to know nothing, Jonas, but what you tell me. All hope of confidence between us, has long deserted me."

"Ecod, I should hope so!" he muttered.

"But if you will tell me what you wish, I will be obedient and will try to please you. I make no merit of that, for I have no friend in my father or my sister, but am quite alone. I am very humble and submissive. You told me you would break my spirit, and you have done so. Do not break my heart too!"

She ventured, as she said these words, to lay her hand upon his shoulder. He suffered it to rest there, in his exultation; and the whole mean, abject, sordid, pitiful soul of the man,

looked at her, for the moment, through his wicked eyes.

For the moment only: for, with the same hurried return to something within himself, he bade her, in a surly tone, show her obedience by executing his commands without delay. When she had withdrawn, he paced up and down the room several times; but always with his right hand clenched, as if it held something; which it did not, being empty. When he was tired of this, he threw himself into a chair, and thoughtfully turned up the sleeve of his right arm, as if he were rather musing about its strength than examining it; but, even then, he kept the hand clenched.

He was brooding in this chair, with his eyes cast down upon the ground, when Mrs. Gamp came in to tell him that the little room was ready. Not being quite sure of her reception after interfering in the quarrel, Mrs. Gamp, as a means of interesting and propitiating her patron, affected a deep solicitude in Mr. Chuffey.

"How is he now, sir?" she said.

"Who?" cried Jonas, raising his head, and staring at her.

"To be sure?" returned the matron with a smile and a curtsy. "What am I thinking of! You wasn't here, sir, when he was took so strange. I never see a poor dear creetur took so strange in all my life, except a patient much about the same age, as I once nussed, which his calling was the custom-'us, and his name was Mrs. Harris's own father, as pleasant a singer, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as ever you heerd, with a voice like a Jew's-harp in the bass notes, that it took six men to hold at sech times, foaming frightful."

"Chuffey, eh?" said Jonas carelessly, seeing that she went up to the old clerk, and looked at him. "Ha!"

"The creetur's head's so hot," said Mrs. Gamp, "that you might eat a flat-iron at it. And no wonder I am sure, considerin' the things he said!"

"Said!" cried Jonas. "What did he say?"

Mrs. Gamp laid her hand upon her heart, to put some check upon its palpitations, and turning up her eyes replied in a faint voice:

"The awfullest things, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as ever I heerd! Which Mrs. Harris's father never spoke a word when took so, some does and some don't, except sayin' when he come round, 'Where is Sairey Gamp?' But raly, sir, when Mr. Chuffey comes to ask who's lyin' dead up-stairs, and——"

"Who's lying dead up-stairs!" repeated Jonas, standing aghast.

Mrs. Gamp nodded, made as if she were swallowing, and went on.

"Who's lying dead up-stairs; sech was his Bible language; and where was Mr. Chuzzlewit as had the only son; and when he goes up-stairs a looking in the beds and wandering about the rooms, and comes down again a whisperin' softly to his-self about foul play and that; it give me sich a turn, I don't deny it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, that I never could have kep myself up but for a little drain o' spirits, which I seldom touches, but could always wish to know where to find, if so dispoqed, never knowin' wot may happen next, the world bein' so uncertain."

"Why, the old fool's mad!" cried Jonas, much disturbed.

"That's my opinion, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, "and I will not deceive you. I believe as Mr. Chuffey, sir, rekwires attention (if I may make so bold), and should not have his liberty to wex and worrit your sweet lady as he does."

"Why, who minds what he says?" retorted Jonas.

"Still he is worritin', sir," said Mrs. Gamp. "No one don't mind him, but he *is* a ill convenience."

"Ecod, you're right," said Jonas, looking doubtfully at the subject of this conversation.

"I have half a mind to shut him up."

Mrs. Gamp rubbed her hands and smiled, and shook her head, and sniffed expressively, as scenting a job.

"Could you—could you take care of such an idiot, now, in some spare room up-stairs?" asked Jonas.

"Me and a friend of mine, one off, one on, could do it, Mr. Chuzzlewit," replied the nurse; "our charges not bein' high, but wishin' they was lower, and allowance made considerin' not strangers. Me and Betsey Prig, sir, would undertake Mr. Chuffey, reasonable," said Mrs. Gamp, looking at him with her head on one side, as if he had been a piece of goods, for which she was driving a bargain; "and give every satigefaction. Betsey Prig has nussed a many lunacies, and well she knows their ways, which puttin' 'em right close afore the fire, when fractious, is the certainest and most compoging."

While Mrs. Gamp discoursed to this effect, Jonas was walking up and down the room again: glancing covertly at the old clerk, as he did so. He now made a stop and said:

"I must look after him, I suppose, or I may have him doing some mischief. What say you?"

"Nothin' more likely!" Mrs. Gamp replied. "As well I have experienced, I do assure you, sir."

"Well! Look after him for the present, and—let me see—three days from this time let the other woman come here, and we'll see if we can make a bargain of it. About nine or ten o'clock at night, say. Keep your eye upon him in the meanwhile, and don't talk about it. He's as mad as a March hare!"

"Madder!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "A deal madder!"

"See to him, then; take care that he does no harm; and recollect what I have told you."

Leaving Mrs. Gamp in the act of repeating all she had been told, and of producing in support of her memory and trustworthiness, many commendations selected from among the most remarkable opinions of the celebrated Mrs. Harris, he descended to the little room prepared for him, and pulling off his coat and his boots, put them outside the door before he locked it. In locking it, he was careful so to adjust the key, as to baffle any curious person who might try to peep in through the keyhole; and when he had taken these precautions, he sat down to his supper.

"Mr. Chuff," he muttered, "it'll be pretty easy to be even with *you*. It's of no use doing things by halves, and as long as I stop here, I'll take good care of you. When I am off, you may say what you please. But it's a d—d strange thing," he added, pushing away his untouched plate, and striding moodily to and fro, "that his drivellings should have taken this turn just now."

After pacing the little room from end to end several times, he sat down in another chair.

"I say just now, but for anything I know, he may have been carrying on the same game all along. Old dog! He shall be gagged!"

He paced the room again in the same restless and unsteady way; and then sat down upon the bedstead, leaning his chin upon his hand, and looking at the table. When he had looked at it for a long time, he remembered his supper; and resuming the chair he had first occupied, began to eat with great rapacity: not like a hungry man, but as if he were determined to do it. He drank too, roundly; sometimes stopping in the middle of a draught to walk, and change his seat and walk again, and dart back to the table and fall to, in a ravenous hurry, as before.

It was now growing dark. As the gloom of evening, deepening into night, came on, another dark shade emerging from within him seemed to overspread his face, and slowly change it. Slowly, slowly; darker and darker; more and more haggard; creeping over him by little and little: until it was black night within him and without.

The room in which he had shut himself up, was on the ground floor, at the back of the house. It was lighted by a dirty skylight, and a door in the wall, opening into a narrow covered passage or blind-aisle, very little frequented after five or six o'clock in the evening, and not in much use as a thoroughfare at any hour. But it had an outlet in a neighbouring street.

The ground on which this chamber stood, had at one time, not within his recollection, been a yard; and had been converted to its present purpose, for use as an office. But the occasion for it, died with the man who built it; and saving that it had sometimes served as an apology for a spare bedroom, and that the old clerk had once held it (but that was years ago) as his recognised apartment, it had been little troubled by Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son. It was a blotched, stained, mouldering room, like a vault; and there were water-pipes running through it, which at unexpected times in the night, when other things were quiet, clicked and gurgled suddenly, as if they were choking.

The door into the court had not been opened for a long, long time; but the key had always hung in one place, and there it hung now. He was prepared for its being rusty; for he had a little bottle of oil in his pocket and the feather of a pen, with which he lubricated the key, and the lock too, carefully. All this while he had been without his coat, and had nothing on his feet but his stockings. He now got softly into bed, in the same state, and tossed from side to side to tumble it. In his restless condition, that was easily done.

When he arose, he took from his portmanteau, which he had caused to be carried into that place when he came home, a pair of clumsy shoes, and put them on his feet; also a pair of leather leggings, such as countrymen are used to wear, with straps to fasten them to the waistband. In these he dressed himself at leisure. Lastly, he took out a common frock of coarse dark jean, which he drew over his own under-clothing; and a felt hat—he had purposely left his own up-stairs. He then sat down by the door, with the key in his hand, waiting.

He had no light; the time was dreary, long, and awful. The ringers were practising in a neighbouring church, and the clashing of the bells was almost maddening. Curse the clamouring bells, they seemed to know that he was listening at the door, and to proclaim it in a crowd of voices to all the town! Would they never be still?

They ceased at last, and then the silence was so new and terrible that it seemed the prelude

to some dreadful noise. Footsteps in the court! Two men. He fell back from the door on tip-toe, as if they could have seen him through its wooden panels.

They passed on, talking (he could make out) about a skeleton which had been dug up yesterday, in some work of excavation near at hand, and was supposed to be that of a murdered man. "So murder is not always found out, you see," they said to one another as they turned the corner.

Hush!

He put the key into the lock, and turned it. The door resisted for a while, but soon came stiffly open: mingling with the sense of fever in his mouth, a taste of rust, and dust, and earth, and rotten wood. He looked out; passed out; locked it after him.

All was clear and quiet, as he fled away.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CONCLUSION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS
AND HIS FRIEND.

DID no men passing through the dim streets shrink without knowing why, when he came stealing up behind them? As he glided on, had no child in its sleep an indistinct perception of a guilty shadow falling on its bed, that troubled its innocent rest? Did no dog howl, and strive to break its rattling chain, that it might tear him; no burrowing rat, scenting the work he had in hand, essay to gnaw a passage after him, that it might hold a greedy revel at the feast of his providing? When he looked back, across his shoulder, was it to see if his quick footsteps still fell dry upon the dusty pavement, or were already moist and clogged with the red mire that stained the naked feet of Cain!

He shaped his course for the main western road, and soon reached it: riding a part of the way, then alighting and walking on again. He travelled for a considerable distance upon the roof of a stage-coach, which came up while he was a-foot; and when it turned out of his road, bribed the driver of a return post chaise to take him on with him; and then made across the country at a run, and saved a mile or two before he struck again into the road. At last, as his plan was, he came up with a certain lumbering, slow, night-coach, which stopped wherever it could, and was stopping then at a public-house,

while the guard and coachman ate and drank within.

He bargained for a seat outside this coach, and took it. And he quitted it no more until it was within a few miles of its destination, but occupied the same place all night.

All night! It is a common fancy that nature seems to sleep by night. It is a false fancy, as who should know better than he?

The fishes slumbered in the cold, bright, glistening streams and rivers, perhaps; and the birds roosted on the branches of the trees; and in their stalls and pastures beasts were quiet; and human creatures slept. But what of that, when the solemn night was watching, when it never winked, when its darkness watched no less than its light! The stately trees, the moon and shining stars, the softly stirring wind, the over-shadowed lane, the broad, bright country-side, they all kept watch. There was not a blade of growing grass or corn, but watched; and the quieter it was, the more intent and fixed its watch upon him seemed to be.

And yet he slept. Riding on among these sentinels of God, he slept, and did not change the purpose of his journey. If he forgot it in his troubled dreams, it came up steadily, and woke him. But it never woke him to remorse or to abandonment of his design.

He dreamed at one time that he was lying calmly in his bed, thinking of a moonlight night and the noise of wheels, when the old clerk put his head in at the door, and beckoned him. At this signal he arose immediately: being already dressed, in the clothes he actually wore at that time: and accompanied him into a strange city, where the names of the streets were written on the walls in characters quite new to him; which gave him no surprise or uneasiness, for he remembered in his dream to have been there before. Although these streets were very precipitous, insomuch that to get from one to another, it was necessary to descend great heights by ladders that were too short, and ropes that moved deep bells, and swung and swayed as they were clung to, the danger gave him little emotion beyond the first thrill of terror: his anxieties being concentrated on his dress, which was quite unfitted for some festival that was about to be holden there, and in which he had come to take a part. Already, great crowds began to fill the streets, and in one direction myriads of people came rushing down an interminable perspective, strewing flowers and making way for others on white horses, when a terrible figure started from the throng, and cried out that it was the Last Day for all the world. The cry

being spread, there was a wild hurrying on to Judgment; and the press became so great that he and his companion (who was constantly changing, and was never the same man two minutes together, though he never saw one man come or another go), stood aside in a porch, fearfully surveying the multitude; in which there were many faces that he knew, and many that he did not know, but dreamed he did; when all at once a struggling head rose up among the rest—livid and deadly, but the same as he had known it—and denounced him as having appointed that direful day to happen. They closed together. As he strove to free the hand in which he held a club, and strike the blow he had so often thought of, he started to the knowledge of his waking purpose and the rising of the sun.

The sun was welcome to him. There were life and motion, and a world astir, to divide the attention of Day. It was the eye of Night: of wakeful, watchful, silent, and attentive Night, with so much leisure for the observation of his wicked thoughts: that he dreaded most. There is no glare in the night. Even Glory shows to small advantage in the night, upon a crowded battle-field. How then shows Glory's blood-relation, bastard Murder!

Aye! He made no compromise, and held no secret with himself now. Murder. He had come to do it.

"Let me get down here," he said.

"Short of the town, eh?" observed the coachman.

"I may get down where I please, I suppose?"

"You got up to please yourself, and may get down to please yourself. It won't break our hearts to lose you, and it wouldn't have broken 'em if we'd never found you. Be a little quicker. That's all."

The guard had alighted, and was waiting in the road to take his money. In the jealousy and distrust of what he contemplated, he thought this man looked at him with more than common curiosity.

"What are you staring at?" said Jonas.

"Not at a handsome man," returned the guard.

"If you want your fortune told, I'll tell you a bit of it. You won't be drowned. That's a consolation for you."

Before he could retort or turn away, the coachman put an end to the dialogue by giving him a cut with his whip, and bidding him get out for a surly dog. The guard jumped up to his seat at the same moment, and they drove off, laughing; leaving him to stand in the road, and shake his fist at them. He was not displeased though, on second thoughts, to have been taken for an ill-

conditioned common country fellow; but rather congratulated himself upon it as a proof that he was well disguised.

Wandering into a copse by the road-side—but not in that place: two or three miles off—he tore out from a fence a thick, hard, knotted stake; and sitting down beneath a hay-rick, spent some time in shaping it, in peeling off the bark, and fashioning its jagged head, with his knife.

The day passed on. Noon, afternoon, evening. Sunset.

At that serene and peaceful time two men, riding in a gig, came out of the city by a road not much frequented. It was the day on which Mr. Pecksniff had agreed to dine with Montague. He had kept his appointment, and was now going home. His host was riding with him for a short distance; meaning to return by a pleasant track, which Mr. Pecksniff had engaged to show him, through some fields. Jonas knew their plans. He had hung about the inn-yard while they were at dinner and had heard their orders given.

They were loud and merry in their conversation, and might have been heard at some distance: far above the sound of their carriage wheels or horse's hoofs. They came on noisily, to where a stile and footpath indicated their point of separation. Here they stopped.

"It's too soon. Much too soon," said Mr. Pecksniff. "But this is the place, my dear sir. Keep the path, and go straight through the little wood you'll come to. The path is narrow there, but you can't miss it. When shall I see you again? Soon I hope?"

"I hope so," replied Montague.

"Good night!"

"Good night. And a pleasant ride!"

So long as Mr. Pecksniff was in sight, and turned his head, at intervals, to salute him, Montague stood in the road smiling, and waving his hand. But when his new partner had disappeared, and this show was no longer necessary, he sat down on the stile with looks so altered, that he might have grown ten years older in the meantime.

He was flushed with wine, but not gay. His scheme had succeeded, but he showed no triumph. The effort of sustaining his difficult part before his late companion, had fatigued him, perhaps, or it may be, that the evening whispered to his conscience, or it may be (as it *has* been), that a shadowy veil was dropping round him, closing out all thoughts but the presentiment and vague foreknowledge of impending doom.

If there be fluids, as we know there are, which,

conscious of a coming wind, or rain, or frost, will shrink and strive to hide themselves in their glass arteries; may not that subtle liquor of the blood perceive by properties within itself, that hands are raised to waste and spill it; and in the veins of men run cold and dull as his did, in that hour!

So cold, although the air was warm: so dull, although the sky was bright: that he rose up shivering, from his seat, and hastily resumed his walk. He checked himself as hastily: undecided whether to pursue the footpath, which was lonely and retired, or to go back by the road.

He took the footpath.

The glory of the departing sun was on his face. The music of the birds was in his ears. Sweet wild flowers bloomed about him. Thatched roofs of poor men's homes were in the distance; and an old grey spire surmounted by a Cross, rose up between him and the coming night.

He had never read the lesson which these things conveyed; he had ever mocked and turned away from it; but, before going down into a hollow place, he looked round, once, upon the evening prospect, sorrowfully. Then he went down, down, down, into the dell.

It brought him to the wood; a close, thick, shadowy wood, through which the path went winding on, dwindling away into a slender sheep-track. He paused before entering; for the stillness of this spot almost daunted him.

The last rays of the sun were shining in, aslant, making a path of golden light along the stems and branches in its range, which, even as he looked, began to die away, yielding gently to the twilight that came creeping on. It was so very quiet that the soft and stealthy moss about the trunks of some old trees, seemed to have grown out of the silence, and to be its proper offspring. Those other trees which were subdued by blasts of wind in winter time, had not quite tumbled down, but being caught by others, lay all bare and scathed across their leafy arms, as if unwilling to disturb the general repose by the crash of their fall. Vistas of silence opened everywhere, into the heart and innermost recesses of the wood: beginning with the likeness of an aisle, a cloister, or a ruin open to the sky; then tangling off into a deep green rustling mystery, through which gnarled trunks, and twisted boughs, and ivy-covered stems, and trembling leaves, and bark-stripped bodies of old trees stretched out at length, were faintly seen in beautiful confusion.

As the sunlight died away, and evening fell upon the wood, he entered it. Moving, here and there, a bramble or a drooping bough which

stretched across his path, he slowly disappeared. At intervals a narrow opening showed him passing on, or the sharp cracking of some tender branch denoted where he went; then, he was seen or heard no more.

Never more beheld by mortal eye, or heard by mortal ear: one man excepted. That man, parting the leaves and branches on the other side, near where the path emerged again, came leaping out soon afterwards.

What had he left within the wood, that he sprang out of it, as if it were a hell?

The body of a murdered man. In one thick solitary spot, it lay among the last year's leaves of oak and beech, just as it had fallen headlong down. Sopping and soaking in among the leaves that formed its pillow: oozing down into the boggy ground, as if to cover itself from human sight; forcing its way between and through the curling leaves, as if those senseless things rejected and forswore it, and were coiled up in abhorrence; went a dark, dark stain that dyed the whole summer night from earth to heaven.

The doer of this deed came leaping from the wood so fiercely, that he cast into the air a shower of fragments of young boughs, torn away in his passage, and fell with violence upon the grass. But he quickly gained his feet again, and keeping underneath the hedge with his body bent, went running on towards the road. The road once reached, he fell into a rapid walk, and set on towards London.

And he was not sorry for what he had done. He was frightened when he thought of it—when did he not think of it!—but he was not sorry. He had had a terror and dread of the wood when he was in it; but being out of it, and having committed the crime, his fears were now diverted, strangely, to the dark room he had left shut up at home. He had a greater horror, infinitely greater, of that room than of the wood. Now that he was on his return to it, it seemed beyond comparison more dismal and more dreadful than the wood. His hideous secret was shut up in the room, and all its terrors were there; to his thinking it was not in the wood at all. He walked on for ten miles; and then stopped at an alehouse for a coach, which he knew would pass through, on its way to London, before long; and which he also knew was not the coach he had travelled down by, for it came from another place. He sat down outside the door here, on a bench, beside a man who was smoking his pipe. Having called for some beer, and drunk, he offered it to his companion, who thanked him, and took a draught. He could not help thinking that, if the man had

known all, he might scarcely have relished drinking out of the same cup with him.

"A fine night, master!" said this person. "And a rare sunset."

"I didn't see it," was his hasty answer.

"Didn't see it?" returned the man.

"How the devil could I see it, if I was asleep?"

"Asleep? Ay, ay." The man appeared surprised by his unexpected irritability, and saying no more, smoked his pipe in silence. They had not sat very long, when there was a knocking within.

"What's that?" cried Jonas.

"Can't say, I'm sure," replied the man.

He made no further inquiry, for the last question had escaped him, in spite of himself. But he was thinking, at the moment, of the closed-up room; of the possibility of their knocking at the door on some special occasion; of their being alarmed at receiving no answer; of their bursting it open; of their finding the room empty; of their fastening the door into the court, and rendering it impossible for him to get into the house without showing himself in the garb he wore; which would lead to rumour, rumour to detection, detection to death. At that instant, as if by some design and order of circumstances, the knocking had come.

It still continued; like a warning echo of the dread reality he had conjured up. As he could not sit and hear it, he paid for his beer and walked on again. And having slunk about, in places unknown to him, all day; and being out at night, in a lonely road, in an unusual dress, and in that wandering and unsettled frame of mind; he stopped more than once to look about him, hoping he might be in a dream.

Still he was not sorry. No. He had hated the man too much, and had been bent, too desperately and too long, on setting himself free. If the thing could have come over again, he would have done it again. His malignant and revengeful passions were not so easily laid. There was no more penitence or remorse within him now, than there had been while the deed was brewing.

Dread and fear were upon him. To an extent he had never counted on, and could not manage in the least degree. He was so horribly afraid of that infernal room at home. This made him, in a gloomy, murderous, mad way, not only fearful *for* himself but *of* himself; for being, as it were, a part of the room: a something supposed to be there, yet missing from it: he invested himself with its mysterious terrors; and when he pictured in his mind the ugly chamber, false and quiet, false and quiet, through the dark

hours of two nights; and the tumbled bed, and he not in it, though believed to be; he became in a manner his own ghost and phantom, and was at once the haunting spirit and the haunted man.

When the coach came up, which it soon did, he got a place outside, and was carried briskly onward towards home. Now, in taking his seat among the people behind, who were chiefly country people, he conceived a fear that they knew of the murder, and would tell him that the body had been found; which, considering the time and place of the commission of the crime, were events almost impossible to have happened yet, as he very well knew. But, although he did know it, and had therefore no reason to regard their ignorance as anything but the natural sequence to the facts, still this very ignorance of theirs encouraged him. So far encouraged him, that he began to believe the body never would be found, and began to speculate on that probability. Setting off from this point, and measuring time by the rapid hurry of his guilty thoughts, and what had gone before the bloodshed, and the troops of incoherent and disordered images, of which he was the constant prey; he came by daylight to regard the murder as an old murder, and to think himself comparatively safe, because it had not been discovered yet. Yet! When the sun which looked into the wood, and gilded with its rising light a dead man's face, had seen that man alive, and sought to win him to a thought of Heaven, on its going down last night!

But here were London streets again. Hush!

It was but five o'clock. He had time enough to reach his own house unobserved, and before there were many people in the streets, if nothing had happened so far, tending to his discovery. He slipped down from the coach without troubling the driver to stop his horses: and hurrying across the road, and in and out of every by-way that lay near his course, at length approached his own dwelling. He used additional caution in his immediate neighbourhood; halting first to look all down the street before him; then gliding swiftly through that one, and stopping to survey the next; and so on.

The passage-way was empty when his murderer's face looked into it. He stole on, to the door, on tiptoe, as if he dreaded to disturb his own imaginary rest.

He listened. Not a sound. As he turned the key with a trembling hand, and pushed the door softly open with his knee, a monstrous fear beset his mind.

What if the murdered man were there before him!

He cast a fearful glance all round. But there was nothing there.

He went in, locked the door, drew the key through and through the dust and damp in the fire-place to sully it again, and hung it up as of old. He took off his disguise, tied it up in a bundle ready for carrying away and sinking in the river before night, and locked it up in a cupboard. These precautions taken, he undressed, and went to bed.

The raging thirst, the fire that burnt within him as he lay beneath the clothes, the augmented horror of the room, when they shut it out from his view; the agony of listening, in which he paid enforced regard to every sound, and thought the most unlikely one the prelude to that knocking which should bring the news; the starts with which he left his couch, and looking in the glass, imagined that his deed was broadly written in his face, and lying down and burying himself once more beneath the blankets, heard his own heart beating Murder, Murder, in the bed; what words can paint tremendous truths like these!

The morning advanced. There were footsteps in the house. He heard the blinds drawn up, and shutters opened; and now and then a stealthy tread outside his own door. He tried to call out, more than once, but his mouth was dry as if it had been filled with sand. At last he sat up in his bed, and cried:

"Who's there!"

It was his wife.

He asked her what it was o'clock. Nine.

"Did—did no one knock at my door, yesterday?" he faltered. "Something disturbed me; but unless you had knocked the door down, you would have got no notice from me.

"No one," she replied. That was well. He had waited, almost breathless, for her answer. It was a relief to him, if anything could be.

"Mr. Nadgett wanted to see you," she said, "but I told him you were tired, and had requested not to be disturbed. He said it was of little consequence, and went away. As I was opening my window, to let in the cool air, I saw him passing through the street this morning, very early; but he hasn't been again."

Passing through the street that morning. Very early! Jonas trembled at the thought of having had a narrow chance of seeing him himself: even him, who had no object but to avoid people, and sneak on unobserved, and keep his own secrets: and who saw nothing.

He called to her to get his breakfast ready, and prepared to go up-stairs: attiring himself in the clothes he had taken off when he came into

that room, which had been ever since, outside the door. In his secret dread of meeting the household for the first time, after what he had done, he lingered at the door on slight pretexts that they might see him without looking in his face; and left it ajar while he dressed; and called out, to have the windows opened, and the pavement watered, that they might become accustomed to his voice. Even when he had put off the time, by one means or other, so that he had seen or spoken to them all, he could not muster courage for a long while to go in among them, but stood at his own door listening to the murmur of their distant conversation.

He could not stop there for ever, and so joined them. His last glance at the glass had seen a tell-tale face, but that might have been because of his anxious looking in it. He dared not look at them to see if they observed him, but he thought them very silent.

And whatsoever guard he kept upon himself, he could not help listening, and showing that he listened. Whether he attended to their talk, or tried to think of other things, or talked himself, or held his peace, or resolutely counted the dull tickings of a hoarse clock at his back, he always lapsed, as if a spell were on him, into eager listening; for he knew it must come; and his present punishment, and torture, and distraction, were, to listen for its coming.

Hush!

CHAPTER XLVIII.

BEARS TIDINGS OF MARTIN, AND OF MARK, AS WELL AS OF A THIRD PERSON NOT QUITE UNKNOWN TO THE READER. EXHIBITS FILIAL PIETY IN AN UGLY ASPECT; AND CASTS A DOUBTFUL RAY OF LIGHT UPON A VERY DARK PLACE.

TOM PINCH and Ruth were sitting at their early breakfast, with the window open, and a row of the freshest little plants ranged before it on the inside, by Ruth's own hands; and Ruth had fastened a sprig of geranium in Tom's button-hole, to make him very smart and summer-like for the day (it was obliged to be fastened in, or that dear old Tom was certain to lose it); and people were crying flowers up and down the street; and a blundering bee, who had got himself in between the two sashes of the window, was bruising his head against the glass, endeavouring to force himself out into the fine morning, and considering himself enchanted because he couldn't do it; and the morning was as fine a morning as ever was

seen ; and the fragrant air was kissing Ruth and rustling about Tom, as if it said, "How are you, my dears : I came all this way on purpose to salute you ;" and it was one of those glad times when we form, or ought to form, the wish that every one on earth were able to be happy, and catching glimpses of the summer of the heart, to feel the beauty of the summer of the year.

It was even a pleasanter breakfast than usual ; and it was always a pleasant one. For little Ruth had now two pupils to attend, each three times

a week, and each two hours at a time ; and besides this, she had painted some screens and card-racks, and, unknown to Tom (was there ever anything so delightful !) had walked into a certain shop which dealt in such articles, after often peeping through the window ; and had taken courage to ask the mistress of that shop whether she would buy them. And the mistress had not only bought them, but had ordered more ; and that very morning Ruth had made confession of these facts to Tom, and had handed



DONE !

him the money in a little purse she had worked expressly for the purpose. They had been in a flutter about this, and perhaps had shed a happy tear or two for anything the history knows to the contrary ; but it was all over now ; and a brighter face than Tom's, or a brighter face than Ruth's, the bright sun had not looked on, since he went to bed last night.

"My dear girl !" said Tom, coming so abruptly on the subject, that he interrupted himself in the act of cutting a slice of bread, and left the knife

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sticking in the loaf, "what a queer fellow our landlord is ! I don't believe he has been home once, since he got me into that unsatisfactory scrape. I begin to think he will never come home again. What a mysterious life that man does lead, to be sure !"

"Very strange. Is it not, Tom !"

"Really," said Tom, "I hope it is only strange. I hope there may be nothing wrong in it. Sometimes I begin to be doubtful of that. I must have an explanation with him," said Tom, shak-

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ing his head as if this were a most tremendous threat, "when I can catch him!"

A short double knock at the door put Tom's menacing looks to flight, and awakened an expression of surprise instead.

"Heyday!" said Tom. "An early hour for visitors! It must be John, I suppose."

"I—I—don't think it was his knock, Tom," observed his little sister.

"No?" said Tom. "It surely can't be my employer, suddenly arrived in town; directed here by Mr. Fips; and come for the key of the office. It's somebody inquiring for me, I declare! Come in, if you please!"

But when the person came in, Tom Pinch, instead of saying "Did you wish to speak with me, sir?" or "My name is Pinch, sir; what is your business, may I ask?" or addressing him in any such distant terms; cried out "Good gracious Heaven!" and seized him by both hands, with the liveliest manifestations of astonishment and pleasure.

The visitor was not less moved than Tom himself, and they shook hands a great many times, without another word being spoken on either side. Tom was the first to find his voice.

"Mark Tapley, too!" said Tom, running towards the door, and shaking hands with somebody else. "My dear Mark, come in. How are you, Mark? He don't look a day older than he used to do, at the Dragon. How *are* you, Mark!"

"Uncommon jolly, sir, thank'ee," returned Mr. Tapley, all smiles and bows. "I hope I see you well, sir."

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom, patting him tenderly on the back. "How delightful it is to hear his old voice again! My dear Martin, sit down. My sister, Martin. Mr. Chuzzlewit, my love. Mark Tapley from the Dragon, my dear. Good gracious me, what a surprise this is! Sit down. Lord bless me!"

Tom was in such a state of excitement that he couldn't keep himself still for a moment, but was constantly running between Mark and Martin, shaking hands with them alternately, and presenting them over and over again to his sister.

"I remember the day we parted, Martin, as well as if it were yesterday," said Tom. "What a day it was! and what a passion you were in! And don't you remember my overtaking you in the road that morning, Mark, when I was going to Salisbury in the gig to fetch him, and you were looking out for a situation? And don't you recollect the dinner we had at Salisbury, Martin, with John Westlock, eh? Good gracious me! Ruth, my dear, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Mark

Tapley, my love, from the Dragon. More cups and saucers, if you please. Bless my soul, how glad I am to see you both!"

And then Tom (as John Westlock had done on his arrival) ran off to the loaf to cut some bread and butter for them; and before he had spread a single slice, remembered something else, and came running back again to tell it; and then he shook hands with them again; and then he introduced his sister again; and then he did everything he had done already all over again; and nothing Tom could do, and nothing Tom could say, was half sufficient to express his joy at their safe return.

Mr. Tapley was the first to resume his composure. In a very short space of time, he was discovered to have somehow installed himself in office as waiter, or attendant upon the party; a fact which was first suggested to them by his temporary absence in the kitchen, and speedy return with a kettle of boiling water, from which he replenished the tea-pot with a self-possession that was quite his own.

"Sit down and take your breakfast, Mark," said Tom. "Make him sit down and take his breakfast, Martin."

"Oh! I gave him up, long ago, as incorrigible," Martin replied. "He takes his own way, Tom. You would excuse him, Miss Pinch, if you knew his value."

"She knows it, bless you!" said Tom. "I have told her all about Mark Tapley. Have I not, Ruth?"

"Yes, Tom."

"Not all," returned Martin, in a low voice. "The best of Mark Tapley is only known to one man, Tom; and but for Mark, he would hardly be alive to tell it."

"Mark!" said Tom Pinch, energetically: "if you don't sit down this minute, I'll swear at you!"

"Well, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, "sooner than you should do that, I'll comply. It's a considerable invasion of a man's jollity to be made so partickler welcome, but a *Werb* is a word as signifies to be, to do, or to suffer (which is all the grammar, and enough too, as ever I wos taught); and if there's a *Werb* alive, I'm it. For I am always a *bein'*, sometimes a *doin'*, and continually a *sufferin'*."

"Not jolly yet?" asked Tom with a smile.

"Why, I was rather so, over the water, sir," returned Mr. Tapley; "and not entirely without credit. But *Human Natur'* is in a conspiracy again' me; I can't get on. I shall have to leave it in my will, sir, to be wrote upon my tomb: 'He was a man as might have come out strong

if he could have got a chance. But it was denied him.'”

Mr. Tapley took this occasion of looking about him with a grin, and subsequently attacking the breakfast, with an appetite not at all expressive of blighted hopes, or insurmountable despondency.

In the meanwhile, Martin drew his chair a little nearer to Tom and his sister, and related to them what had passed at Mr. Pecksniff's house; adding in few words a general summary of the distresses and disappointments he had undergone since he left England.

“For your faithful stewardship in the trust I left with you, Tom,” he said, “and for all your goodness and disinterestedness, I can never thank you enough. When I add Mary's thanks to mine——”

Ah, Tom! The blood retreated from his cheeks, and came rushing back, so violently, that it was pain to feel it; ease, though, ease, compared with the aching of his wounded heart.

“When I add Mary's thanks to mine,” said Martin, “I have made the only poor acknowledgment it is in our power to offer; but if you knew how much we feel, Tom, you would set some store by it, I am sure.”

And if they had known how much Tom felt—but that no human creature ever knew—they would have set some store by him. Indeed they would.

Tom changed the topic of discourse. He was sorry he could not pursue it, as it gave Martin pleasure; but he was unable, at that moment. No drop of envy or bitterness was in his soul; but he could not master the firm utterance of her name.

He inquired what Martin's projects were.

“No longer to make your fortune, Tom,” said Martin, “but to try to live. I tried that once in London, Tom; and failed. If you will give me the benefit of your advice and friendly counsel, I may succeed better under your guidance. I will do anything, Tom, anything, to gain a livelihood by my own exertions. My hopes do not soar above that, now.”

High-hearted, noble Tom! Sorry to find the pride of his old companion humbled, and to hear him speaking in this altered strain, at once, at once, he drove from his breast the inability to contend with its deep emotions, and spoke out bravely.

“Your hopes do not soar above that!” cried Tom. “Yes they do. How can you talk so! They soar up to the time when you will be happy with her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will be able to claim her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will not be

able to believe that you were ever cast down in spirit, or poor in pocket, Martin. Advice, and friendly counsel! Why of course. But you shall have better advice and counsel (though you cannot have more friendly) than mine. You shall consult John Westlock. We'll go there immediately. It is yet so early that I shall have time to take you to his chambers before I go to business; they are in my way; and I can leave you there, to talk over your affairs with him. So come along. Come along. I am a man of occupation now, you know,” said Tom, with his pleasantest smile; “and have no time to lose. Your hopes don't soar higher than that? I dare say they don't. I know you pretty well. They'll be soaring out of sight soon, Martin, and leaving all the rest of us leagues behind.”

“Ay! But I may be a little changed,” said Martin, “since you knew me pretty well, Tom.”

“What nonsense!” exclaimed Tom. “Why should you be changed? You talk as if you were an old man. I never heard such a fellow! Come to John Westlock's, come. Come along, Mark Tapley. It's Mark's doing, I have no doubt; and it serves you right for having such a grumbler for your companion.”

“There's no credit to be got through being jolly with *you*, Mr. Pinch, anyways,” said Mark, with his face all wrinkled up with grins. “A parish doctor might be jolly with you. There's nothing short of goin' to the U-nited States for a second trip, as would make it at all creditable to be jolly, arter seein' you again!”

Tom laughed, and taking leave of his sister, hurried Mark and Martin out into the street, and away to John Westlock's by the nearest road; for his hour of business was very near at hand, and he prided himself on always being exact to his time.

John Westlock was at home, but, strange to say, was rather embarrassed to see them; and when Tom was about to go into the room where he was breakfasting, said he had a stranger there. It appeared to be a mysterious stranger, for John shut that door as he said it, and led them into the next room.

He was very much delighted, though, to see Mark Tapley; and received Martin with his own frank courtesy. But Martin felt that he did not inspire John Westlock with any unusual interest; and twice or thrice observed that he looked at Tom Pinch doubtfully; not to say compassionately. He thought, and blushed to think, that he knew the cause of this.

“I apprehend you are engaged,” said Martin, when Tom had announced the purport of their

visit. "If you will allow me to come again at your own time, I shall be glad to do so."

"I *am* engaged," replied John, with some reluctance; "but the matter on which I am engaged is one, to say the truth, more immediately demanding your knowledge than mine."

"Indeed!" cried Martin.

"It relates to a member of your family, and is of a serious nature. If you will have the kindness to remain here, it will be a satisfaction to me to have it privately communicated to you, in order that you may judge of its importance for yourself."

"And in the meantime," said Tom, "I must really take myself off, without any further ceremony."

"Is your business so very particular," asked Martin, "that you cannot remain with us for half an hour? I wish you could. What *is* your business, Tom?"

It was Tom's turn to be embarrassed now: but he plainly said, after a little hesitation:

"Why, I am not at liberty to say what it is, Martin: though I hope soon to be in a condition to do so, and am aware of no other reason to prevent my doing so now, than the request of my employer. It's an awkward position to be placed in," said Tom, with an uneasy sense of seeming to doubt his friend, "as I feel every day; but I really cannot help it, can I, John?"

John Westlock replied in the negative; and Martin, expressing himself perfectly satisfied, begged them not to say another word: though he could not help wondering very much, what curious office Tom held, and why he was so secret, and embarrassed, and unlike himself, in reference to it. Nor could he help reverting to it, in his own mind, several times after Tom went away, which he did as soon as this conversation was ended, taking Mr. Tapley with him, who, as he laughingly said, might accompany him as far as Fleet-street, without injury.

"And what do *you* mean to do, Mark?" asked Tom, as they walked on together.

"Mean to do, sir?" returned Mr. Tapley.

"Ay. What course of life do you mean to pursue?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Tapley. "The fact is, that I have been a-thinking rather of the matrimonial line, sir."

"You don't say so, Mark!" cried Tom.

"Yes, sir. I've been a-turnin' of it over."

"And who is the lady, Mark?"

"The which, sir?" said Mr. Tapley.

"The lady. Come! You know what I said," replied Tom, laughing, "as well as I do!"

Mr. Tapley suppressed his own inclination to

laugh; and with one of his most whimsically-twisted looks, replied,

"You couldn't guess, I suppose, Mr. Pinch?"

"How is it possible?" said Tom. "I don't know any of your flames, Mark. Except Mrs. Lupin, indeed."

"Well, sir!" retorted Mr. Tapley. "And supposing it was her!"

Tom stopping in the street to look at him, Mr. Tapley for a moment presented to his view, an utterly stolid and expressionless face: a perfect dead wall of countenance. But opening window after window in it, with astonishing rapidity, and lighting them all up as for a general illumination, he repeated:

"Supposin', for the sake of argument, as it was her, sir!"

"Why I thought such a connection wouldn't suit you, Mark, on any terms!" cried Tom.

"Well, sir, I used to think so myself, once," said Mark. "But I ain't so clear about it now. A dear, sweet creature, sir!"

"A dear, sweet creature? To be sure she is," cried Tom. "But she always was a dear sweet creature, was she not?"

"*Was* she not!" assented Mr. Tapley.

"Then why on earth didn't you marry her at first, Mark, instead of wandering abroad, and losing all this time, and leaving her alone by herself, liable to be courted by other people?"

"Why, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley, in a spirit of unbounded confidence, "I'll tell you how it come about. You know me, Mr. Pinch, sir; there ain't a gentleman alive as knows me better. You're acquainted with my constitution, and you're acquainted with my weakness. My constitution is, to be jolly; and my weakness is, to wish to find a credit in it. Wery good, sir. In this state of mind, I gets a notion in my head that she looks on me with a eye of—with what you may call a favourable sort of eye in fact," said Mr. Tapley, with modest hesitation.

"No doubt," replied Tom. "We knew that perfectly well when we spoke on this subject long ago; before you left the Dragon."

Mr. Tapley nodded assent. "Well, sir! But bein' at that time full of hopeful visions, I arrives at the conclusion that no credit is to be got out of such a way of life as that, where everything agreeable would be ready to one's hand. Lookin' on the bright side of human life in short, one of my hopeful visions is, that there's a deal of misery a-waitin' for me; in the midst of which I may come out tolerable strong, and be jolly under circumstances as reflects some credit. I goes into the world, sir, wery boyant, and I tries this. I goes aboard ship first. and wery soon

discovers (by the ease with which I'm jolly, mind you) as there's no credit to be got *there*. I might have took warning by this, and gave it up; but I didn't. I gets to the U-nited States; and then I *do* begin, I won't deny it, to feel some little credit in sustaining my spirits. What follows? Jest as I'm beginning to come out, and am a treadin' on the werge, my master deceives me."

"Deceives you!" cried Tom.

"Swindles me," retorted Mr. Tapley, with a beaming face. "Turns his back on ev'ry thing as made his service a creditable one, and leaves me high and dry, without a leg to stand upon. In which state, I returns home. Wery good. Then all my hopeful wisions bein' crushed; and findin' that there ain't no credit for me nowhere; I abandons myself to despair, and says, 'Let me do that as has the least credit in it, of all; marry a dear, sweet creatur, as is wery fond of me: me being, at the same time, wery fond of her: lead a happy life, and struggle no more again' the blight which settles on my prospects."

"If your philosophy, Mark," said Tom, who laughed heartily at this speech, "be the oddest I ever heard of, it is not the least wise. Mrs. Lupin has said 'yes,' of course?"

"Why, no, sir," replied Mr. Tapley; "she hasn't gone so far as that yet. Which I attribute principally to my not havin' asked her. But we was wery agreeable together—comfortable, I may say—the night I come home. It's all right, sir."

"Well!" said Tom, stopping at the Temple Gate. "I wish you joy, Mark, with all my heart. I shall see you again to-day, I dare say. Good-bye for the present."

"Good-bye, sir! Good-bye, Mr. Pinch," he added, by way of soliloquy, as he stood looking after him. "Although you *are* a damper to a honourable ambition. You little think it, but you was the first to dash my hopes. Pecksniff would have built me up for life, but your sweet temper pulled me down. Good-bye, Mr. Pinch!"

While these confidences were interchanged between Tom Pinch and Mark, Martin and John Westlock were very differently engaged. They were no sooner left together than Martin said, with an effort he could not disguise:

"Mr. Westlock, we have met only once before, but you have known Tom a long while, and that seems to render you familiar to me. I cannot talk freely with you on any subject unless I relieve my mind of what oppresses it just now. I see with pain that you so far mistrust me that you think me likely to impose on Tom's regard-

lessness of himself, or on his kind nature, or some of his good qualities."

"I had no intention," replied John, "of conveying any such impression to you, and am exceedingly sorry to have done so."

"But you entertain it?" said Martin.

"You ask me so pointedly and directly," returned the other, "that I cannot deny the having accustomed myself to regard you as one who, not in wantonness but in mere thoughtlessness of character, did not sufficiently consider his nature and did not quite treat it as it deserves to be treated. It is much easier to slight than to appreciate Tom Pinch."

This was not said warmly, but was energetically spoken too; for there was no subject in the world (but one) on which the speaker felt so strongly.

"I grew into the knowledge of Tom," he pursued, "as I grew towards manhood; and I have learned to love him as something infinitely better than myself. I did not think that you understood him when we met before. I did not think that you greatly cared to understand him. The instances of this which I observed in you, were, like my opportunities for observation, very trivial—and were very harmless, I dare say. But they were not agreeable to me, and they forced themselves upon me; for I was not upon the watch for them, believe me. You will say," added John, with a smile, as he subsided into more of his accustomed manner, "that I am not by any means agreeable to you. I can only assure you, in reply, that I would not have originated this topic on any account."

"I originated it," said Martin; "and so far from having any complaint to make against you, highly esteem the friendship you entertain for Tom, and the very many proofs you have given him of it. Why should I endeavour to conceal from you?" he coloured deeply though: "that I neither understood him nor cared to understand him when I was his companion; and that I am very truly sorry for it now!"

It was so sincerely said, at once so modestly and manfully, that John offered him his hand as if he had not done so before; and Martin giving his in the same open spirit, all constraint between the young men vanished.

"Now pray," said John, "when I tire your patience very much in what I am going to say, recollect that it has an end to it, and that the end is the point of the story."

With this preface, he related all the circumstances connected with his having presided over the illness and slow recovery of the patient at the Bull; and tacked on to the skirts of that

narrative Tom's own account of the business on the wharf. Martin was not a little puzzled when he came to an end, for the two stories seemed to have no connection with each other, and to leave him, as the phrase is, all abroad.

"If you will excuse me for one moment," said John, rising, "I will beg you almost immediately to come into the next room."

Upon that, he left Martin to himself, in a state of considerable astonishment; and soon came back again to fulfil his promise. Accompanying him into the next room, Martin found there a third person; no doubt the stranger of whom his host had spoken when Tom Pinch introduced him.

He was a young man; with deep black hair and eyes. He was gaunt and pale; and evidently had not long recovered from a severe illness. He stood as Martin entered, but sat again at John's desire. His eyes were cast downward; and but for one glance at them both, half in humiliation and half in entreaty, he kept them so, and sat quite still and silent.

"This person's name is Lewsome," said John Westlock, "whom I have mentioned to you as having been seized with an illness at the inn near here, and undergone so much. He has had a very hard time of it, ever since he began to recover; but, as you see, he is now doing well."

As he did not move or speak, and John Westlock made a pause, Martin, not knowing what to say, said that he was glad to hear it.

"The short statement that I wish you to hear from his own lips, Mr. Chuzzlewit," John pursued: looking attentively at him and not at Martin: "he made to me for the first time yesterday, and repeated to me this morning, without the least variation of any essential particular. I have already told you that he informed me before he was removed from the Inn, that he had a secret to disclose to me which lay heavy on his mind. But, fluctuating between sickness and health, and between his desire to relieve himself of it, and his dread of involving himself by revealing it, he has, until yesterday, avoided the disclosure. I never pressed him for it (having no idea of its weight or import, or of my right to do so), until within a few days past; when, understanding from him, on his own voluntary avowal, in a letter from the country, that it related to a person whose name was Jonas Chuzzlewit; and thinking that it might throw some light on that little mystery which made Tom anxious now and then; I urged the point upon him, and heard his statement, as you will now, from his own lips. It is due to him to say, that

in the apprehension of death, he committed it to writing sometime since, and folded it in a sealed paper, addressed to me: which he could not resolve, however, to place of his own act in my hands. He has the paper in his breast, I believe, at this moment."

The young man touched it hastily; in corroboration of the fact.

"It will be well to leave that in our charge, perhaps," said John. "But do not mind it now."

As he said this, he held up his hand to bespeak Martin's attention. It was already fixed upon the man before him, who, after a short silence said, in a low, weak, hollow voice:

"What relation was Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who—"

"—Who died—to me?" said Martin. "He was my grandfather's brother."

"I fear he was made away with. Murdered!"

"My God!" said Martin. "By whom?"

The young man, Lewsome, looked up in his face, and casting down his eyes again, replied:

"I fear, by me."

"By you?" cried Martin.

"Not by my act, but I fear by my means."

"Speak out!" said Martin, "and speak the truth."

"I fear this *is* the truth."

Martin was about to interrupt him again, but John Westlock saying softly, "Let him tell his story in his own way," Lewsome went on thus:

"I have been bred a surgeon, and for the last few years have served a general practitioner in the city, as his assistant. While I was in his employment I became acquainted with Jonas Chuzzlewit. He is the principal in this deed."

"What do you mean?" demanded Martin sternly. "Do you know he is the son of the old man of whom you have spoken?"

"I do," he answered.

He remained silent for some moments, when he resumed at the point where he had left off.

"I have reason to know it; for I have often heard him wish his old father dead, and complain of his being wearisome to him, and a drag upon him. He was in the habit of doing so, at a place of meeting we had—three or four of us—at night. There was no good in the place, you may suppose, when you hear that he was the chief of the party. I wish I had died myself, and never seen it!"

He stopped again; and again resumed as before.

"We met to drink and game; not for large sums, but for sums that were large to us. He generally won. Whether or no, he lent money

at interest to those who lost; and in this way, though I think we all secretly hated him, he came to be the master of us. To propitiate him, we made a jest of his father: it began with his debtors; I was one: and we used to toast a quicker journey to the old man, and a swift inheritance to the young one."

He paused again.

"One night he came there in a very bad humour. He had been greatly tried, he said, by the old man that day. He and I were alone together: and he angrily told me, that the old man was in his second childhood; that he was weak, imbecile, and drivelling; as unbearable to himself as he was to other people; and that it would be a charity to put him out of the way. He swore that he had often thought of mixing something with the stuff he took for his cough, which should help him to die easily. People were sometimes smothered who were bitten by mad dogs, he said; and why not help these lingering old men out of their troubles too? He looked full at me as he said so, and I looked full at him; but it went no farther that night."

He stopped once more, and was silent for so long an interval, that John Westlock said "Go on." Martin had never removed his eyes from his face, but was so absorbed in horror and astonishment, that he could not speak.

"It may have been a week after that, or it may have been less, or more—the matter was in my mind all the time, but I cannot recollect the time, as I should any other period—when he spoke to me again. We were alone then, too; being there before the usual hour of assembling. There was no appointment between us; but I think I went there to meet him, and I know he came there to meet me. He was there first. He was reading a newspaper when I went in, and nodded to me without looking up, or leaving off reading. I sat down opposite and close to him. He said, immediately, that he wanted me to get him some of two sorts of drugs. One that was instantaneous in its effect; of which he wanted very little. One that was slow, and not suspicious in appearance; of which he wanted more. While he was speaking to me he still read the newspaper. He said 'Drugs,' and never used any other word. Neither did I."

"This all agrees with what I have heard before," observed John Westlock.

"I asked him what he wanted the drugs for? He said for no harm; to physic cats; what did it matter to me? I was going out to a distant colony (I had recently got the appointment,

which, as Mr. Westlock knows, I have since lost by my sickness, and which was my only hope of salvation from ruin), and what did it matter to me? He could get them without my aid at half a hundred places, but not so easily as he could get them of me. This was true. He might not want them at all, he said, and he had no present idea of using them; but he wished to have them by him. All this time he still read the newspaper. We talked about the price. He was to forgive me a small debt—I was quite in his power—and to pay me five pounds; and there the matter dropped, through others coming in. But, next night, under exactly similar circumstances, I gave him the drugs, on his saying I was a fool to think that he should ever use them for any harm: and he gave me the money. We have never met since. I only know that the poor old father died soon afterwards, just as he would have died from this cause; and that I have undergone, and suffer now, intolerable misery. Nothing," he added, stretching out his hands, "can paint my misery! It is well deserved, but nothing can paint it."

With that he hung his head, and said no more. Wasted and wretched, he was not a creature upon whom to heap reproaches that were unavailing.

"Let him remain at hand," said Martin, turning from him; "but out of sight, in Heaven's name!"

"He will remain here," John whispered. "Come with me!" Softly turning the key upon him as they went out, he conducted Martin into the adjoining room, in which they had been before.

Martin was so amazed, so shocked, and confounded by what he had heard, that it was some time before he could reduce it to any order in his mind, or could sufficiently comprehend the bearing of one part upon another, to take in all the details at one view. When he, at length, had the whole narrative clearly before him, John Westlock went on to point out the great probability of the guilt of Jonas being known to other people, who traded in it for their own benefit, and who were, by such means, able to exert that control over him which Tom Pinch had accidentally witnessed, and unconsciously assisted. This appeared so plain, that they agreed upon it without difficulty; but instead of deriving the least assistance from this source, they found that it embarrassed them the more.

They knew nothing of the real parties, who possessed this power. The only person before them was Tom's landlord. They had no right to question Tom's landlord, even if they could

find him, which, according to Tom's account, it would not be easy to do. And granting that they did question him, and he answered (which was taking a good deal for granted), he had only to say, with reference to the adventure on the wharf, that he had been sent from such and such a place to summon Jonas back on urgent business, and there was an end of it.

Besides, there was the great difficulty and responsibility of moving at all in the matter. Lewsome's story might be false; in his wretched state it might be greatly heightened by a diseased brain; or admitting it to be entirely true, the old man might have died a natural death. Mr. Pecksniff had been there at the time; as Tom immediately remembered, when he came back in the afternoon, and shared their counsels; and there had been no secrecy about it. Martin's grandfather was of right the person to decide upon the course that should be taken; but to get at his views would be impossible, for Mr. Pecksniff's views were certain to be his. And the nature of Mr. Pecksniff's views in reference to his own son-in-law, might be easily reckoned upon.

Apart from these considerations, Martin could not endure the thought of seeming to grasp at this unnatural charge against his relative, and using it as a stepping-stone to his grandfather's favour. But, that he would seem to do so, if he presented himself before his grandfather in Mr. Pecksniff's house again, for the purpose of declaring it; and that Mr. Pecksniff, of all men, would represent his conduct in that despicable light, he perfectly well knew. On the other hand, to be in possession of such a statement, and take no measures for further inquiry in reference to it, was tantamount to being a partner in the guilt it professed to disclose.

In a word, they were wholly unable to discover any outlet from this maze of difficulty, which did not lie through some perplexed and entangled thicket. And although Mr. Tapley was promptly taken into their confidence; and the fertile imagination of that gentleman suggested many bold expedients, which, to do him justice, he was quite ready to carry into instant operation on his own personal responsibility; still, 'bating the general zeal of Mr. Tapley's nature, nothing was made particularly clearer by these offers of service.

It was in this position of affairs that Tom's account of the strange behaviour of the decayed clerk, on the night of the tea-party, became of great moment, and finally convinced them that to arrive at a more accurate knowledge of the workings of that old man's mind and memory,

would be to take a most important stride in their pursuit of the truth. So, having first satisfied themselves that no communication had ever taken place between Lewsome and Mr. Chuffey (which would have accounted at once for any suspicions the latter might entertain), they unanimously resolved that the old clerk was the man they wanted.

But, like the unanimous resolution of a public meeting, which will oftentimes declare that this or that grievance is not to be borne a moment longer, which is nevertheless borne for a century or two afterwards, without any modification, they only reached in this the conclusion that they were all of one mind. For, it was one thing to want Mr. Chuffey, and another thing to get at him; and to do that without alarming him, or without alarming Jonas, or without being discomfited by the difficulty of striking, in an instrument so out of tune and so unused, the note they sought, was an end as far from their reach as ever.

The question then became, who of those about the old clerk had had the most influence with him, that night? Tom said his young mistress clearly. But Tom and all of them shrunk from the thought of entrapping her, and making her the innocent means of bringing retribution on her cruel husband. Was there nobody else? Why yes. In a very different way, Tom said, he was influenced by Mrs. Gamp, the nurse: who had once had the control of him, as he understood, for some time.

They caught at this immediately. Here was a new way out, developed in a quarter until then overlooked. John Westlock knew Mrs. Gamp; he had given her employment; he was acquainted with her place of residence: for that good lady had obligingly furnished him, at parting, with a pack of her professional cards for general distribution. It was decided that Mrs. Gamp should be approached with caution, but approached without delay; and that the depths of that discreet matron's knowledge of Mr. Chuffey, and means of bringing them, or one of them, into communication with him, should be carefully sounded.

On this service, Martin and John Westlock determined to proceed that night; waiting on Mrs. Gamp first, at her lodgings; and taking their chance of finding her in the repose of private life, or of having to seek her out, elsewhere, in the exercise of her professional duties. Tom returned home, that he might lose no opportunity of having an interview with Nadgett, by being absent in the event of his reappearance. And Mr. Tapley remained (by his own particular

desire) for the time being in Furnival's Inn, to look after Lewsome; who might safely have been left to himself, however, for any thought he seemed to entertain of giving them the slip.

Before they parted on their several errands, they caused him to read aloud, in the presence of them all, the paper which he had about him, and the declaration he had attached to it, which was to the effect, that he had written it voluntarily, in the fear of death, and in the torture of his mind. And when he had done so, they all

signed it, and taking it from him, of his free will, locked it in a place of safety.

Martin also wrote, by John's advice, a letter to the trustees of the famous Grammar School, boldly claiming the successful design as his, and charging Mr. Pecksniff with the fraud he had committed. In this proceeding also, John was hotly interested: observing with his usual irreverence, that Mr. Pecksniff had been a successful rascal all his life through, and that it would be a lasting source of happiness to him (John) if he



"SPEAK OUT!" SAID MARTIN, "AND SPEAK THE TRUTH."

could help to do him justice in the smallest particular.

A busy day! But Martin had no lodgings yet; so when these matters were disposed of, he excused himself from dining with John Westlock and was fain to wander out alone, and look for some. He succeeded, after great trouble, in engaging two garrets for himself and Mark, situated in a court in the Strand, not far from Temple Bar. Their luggage, which was waiting for them at a coach-office, he conveyed to this new place of refuge; and it was with a glow of satisfaction, which as a selfish man he never could have known and never had, that, thinking

how much pains and trouble he had saved Mark, and how pleased and astonished Mark would be, he afterwards walked up and down, in the Temple, eating a meat-pie for his dinner.

CHAPTER XLIX.

IN WHICH MRS. HARRIS, ASSISTED BY A TEA-POT, IS THE CAUSE OF A DIVISION BETWEEN FRIENDS.

MRS. GAMP'S apartment in Kingsgate-street, High Holborn, wore, metaphorically speaking, a robe of state. It was swept

and garnished for the reception of a visitor. That visitor was Betsey Prig: Mrs. Prig of Bartlemy's; or as some said Barklemy's, or as some said Bardlemy's: for by all these endearing and familiar appellations, had the hospital of Saint Bartholomew become a household word among the sisterhood which Betsey Prig adorned.

Mrs. Gamp's apartment was not a spacious one, but, to a contented mind, a closet is a palace; and the first-floor front at Mr. Sweedlepipe's may have been, in the imagination of Mrs. Gamp, a stately pile. If it were not exactly that, to restless intellects, it at least comprised as much accommodation as any person, not sanguine to insanity, could have looked for, in a room of its dimensions. For only keep the bedstead always in your mind; and you were safe. That was the grand secret. Remembering the bedstead, you might even stoop to look under the little round table for anything you had dropped, without hurting yourself much against the chest of drawers, or qualifying as a patient of Saint Bartholomew, by falling into the fire.

Visitors were much assisted in their cautious efforts to preserve an unflagging recollection of this piece of furniture, by its size; which was great. It was not a turn-up bedstead, nor yet a French bedstead, nor yet a four-post bedstead, but what is poetically called a tent: the sacking whereof, was low and bulgy, insomuch that Mrs. Gamp's box would not go under it, but stopped half way, in a manner which while it did violence to the reason, likewise endangered the legs, of a stranger. The frame too, which would have supported the canopy and hangings if there had been any, was ornamented with divers pippins carved in timber, which on the slightest provocation and frequently on none at all, came tumbling down; harassing the peaceful guest with inexplicable terrors.

The bed itself was decorated with a patchwork quilt of great antiquity; and at the upper end, upon the side nearest to the door, hung a scanty curtain of blue check, which prevented the Zephyrs that were abroad in Kingsgate-street from visiting Mrs. Gamp's head too roughly. Some rusty gowns and other articles of that lady's wardrobe depended from the posts; and these had so adapted themselves by long usage to her figure, that more than one impatient husband coming in precipitately, at about the time of twilight, had been for an instant stricken dumb by the supposed discovery that Mrs. Gamp had hanged herself. One gentleman, coming on the usual hasty errand, had said indeed, that they looked like guardian angels "watching of her in her sleep." But that, as Mrs. Gamp said, "was

his first;" and he never repeated the sentiment though he often repeated his visit.

The chairs in Mrs. Gamp's apartment were extremely large and broad-backed, which was more than a sufficient reason for their being but two in number. They were both elbow-chairs, of ancient mahogany; and were chiefly valuable for the slippery nature of their seats, which had been originally horse-hair, but were now covered with a shiny substance of a bluish tint, from which the visitor began to slide away with a dismayed countenance, immediately after sitting down. What Mrs. Gamp wanted in chairs she made up in bandboxes; of which she had a great collection devoted to the reception of various miscellaneous valuables, which were not, however, as well protected as the good woman, by a pleasant fiction, seemed to think: for, though every bandbox had a carefully closed lid, not one among them had a bottom: owing to which cause, the property within was merely, as it were extinguished. The chest of drawers having been originally made to stand upon the top of another chest, had a dwarfish, elfin look, alone; but, in regard of its security, it had a great advantage over the bandboxes, for as all the handles had been long ago pulled off, it was very difficult to get at its contents. This indeed was only to be done by one of two devices; either by tilting the whole structure forward until all the drawers fell out together, or by opening them singly with knives, like oysters.

Mrs. Gamp stored all her household matters in a little cupboard by the fire-place; beginning below the surface (as in nature) with the coals, and mounting gradually upwards to the spirits, which, from motives of delicacy, she kept in a tea-pot. The chimney-piece was ornamented with a small almanack, marked here and there in Mrs. Gamp's own hand, with a memorandum of the date at which some lady was expected to fall due. It was also embellished with three profiles: one, in colours, of Mrs. Gamp herself in early life; one, in bronze, of a lady in feathers, supposed to be Mrs. Harris, as she appeared when dressed for a ball; and one, in black, of Mr. Gamp, deceased. The last was a full length, in order that the likeness might be rendered more obvious and forcible, by the introduction of the wooden leg.

A pair of bellows, a pair of pattens, a toasting-fork, a kettle, a pap-boat, a spoon for the administration of medicine to the refractory, and lastly, Mrs. Gamp's umbrella, which as something of great price and rarity was displayed with particular ostentation, completed the decorations of the chimney-piece and

adjacent wall. Towards these objects, Mrs. Gamp raised her eyes in satisfaction when she had arranged the tea-board, and had concluded her arrangements for the reception of Betsey Prig, even unto the setting forth of two pounds of Newcaston salmon, intensely pickled.

"There! Now drat you, Betsey, don't be long!" said Mrs. Gamp, apostrophising her absent friend. "For I can't bear to wait, I do assure you. To wotever place I goes, I sticks to this one mortar, 'I'm easy pleased; it is but little as I wants; but I must have that little of the best, and to the minit when the clock strikes, else we do not part as I could wish, but bearin' malice in our arts."

Her own preparations were of the best, for they comprehended a delicate new loaf, a plate of fresh butter, a basin of fine white sugar and other arrangements on the same scale. Even the snuff with which she now refreshed herself, was so choice in quality, that she took a second pinch.

"There's the little bell a ringin' now," said Mrs. Gamp, hurrying to the stair-head and looking over. "Betsey Prig, my—why it's that there disapintin' Sweedlepipes, I do believe."

"Yes, it's me," said the barber in a faint voice; "I've just come in."

"You're always a comin' in, I think," muttered Mrs. Gamp to herself, "except wen you're a going out. I ha'n't no patience with that man!"

"Mrs. Gamp," said the barber. "I say! Mrs. Gamp!"

"Well," cried Mrs. Gamp, impatiently, as she descended the stairs. "What is it? Is the Thames a-fire, and cooking its own fish, Mr. Sweedlepipes? Why wot's the man gone and been a-doin' of to himself? He's as white as chalk!"

She added the latter clause of inquiry, when she got down-stairs, and found him seated in the shaving-chair, pale and disconsolate.

"You recollect," said Poll. "You recollect young—"

"Not young Wilkins!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "Don't say young Wilkins, wotever you do. If young Wilkins's wife is took—"

"It isn't anybody's wife," exclaimed the little barber. "Bailey, young Bailey!"

"Why, wot do you mean to say that chit's been a-doin' of?" retorted Mrs. Gamp, sharply. "Stuff and nonsense, Mr. Sweedlepipes!"

"He hasn't been a-doing anything!" exclaimed poor Poll, quite desperate. "What do you catch me up so short for, when you see me put out to that extent that I can hardly

speak! He'll never do anything again. He's done for. He's killed. The first time I ever see that boy," said Poll, "I charged him too much for a redpoll. I asked him three-half-pence for a penny one, because I was afraid he'd beat me down. But he didn't. And now he's dead; and if you was to crowd all the steam-engines and electric fluids that ever was, into this shop, and set 'em every one to work their hardest, they couldn't square the account, though it's only a ha'penny!"

Mr. Sweedlepipe turned aside to the towel, and wiped his eyes with it.

"And what a clever boy he was!" he said. "What a surprising young chap he was! How he talked! and what a deal he know'd! Shaved in this very chair he was; only for fun; it was all his fun; he was full of it. Ah! to think that he'll never be shaved in earnest! The birds might every one have died, and welcome," cried the little barber, looking round him at the cages, and again applying to the towel, "sooner than I'd have heard this news!"

"How did you ever come to hear it?" said Mrs. Gamp. "Who told you?"

"I went out," returned the little barber, "into the city, to meet a sporting Gent upon the Stock Exchange, that wanted a few slow pigeons to practise at; and when I'd done with him, I went to get a little drop of beer, and there I heard everybody a-talking about it. It's in the papers."

"You are in a nice state of confugion, Mr. Sweedlepipes, you are!" said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head; "and my opinion is, as half-a-dudgeon fresh young lively leeches on your temples, wouldn't be too much to clear your mind, which so I tell you. Wot were they a-talkin' on, and wot was in the papers?"

"All about it!" cried the barber. "What else do you suppose? Him and his master were upset on a journey, and he was carried to Salisbury, and was breathing his last when the account came away. He never spoke afterwards. Not a single word. That's the worst of it to me; but that ain't all. His master can't be found. The other manager of their office in the city: Crimple, David Crimple: has gone off with the money, and is advertised for, with a reward, upon the walls. Mr. Montague, poor young Bailey's master (what a boy he was!) is advertised for too. Some say he's slipped off, to join his friend abroad; some say he mayn't have got away yet; and they're looking for him high and low. Their office is a smash; a swindle altogether. But what's a

Life Insurance Office to a Life! And what a Life Young Bailey's was!"

"He was born into a wale," said Mrs. Gamp, with philosophical coolness; "and he lived in a wale; and he must take the consequences of sech a sitiuation. But don't you hear nothink of Mr. Chuzzlewit in all this?"

"No," said Poll, "nothing to speak of. His name wasn't printed as one of the board, though some people say it was just going to be. Some believe he was took in, and some believe he was one of the takers-in; but however that may be, they can't prove nothing against him. This morning he went up of his own accord afore the Lord Mayor or some of them city big-wigs, and complained that he'd been swindled, and that these two persons had gone off and cheated him, and that he had just found out that Montague's name wasn't even Montague, but something else. And they do say that he looked like Death, owing to his losses. But Lord forgive me," cried the barber, coming back again to the subject of his individual grief, "what's his looks to me! He might have died and welcome, fifty times, and not been such a loss as Bailey!"

At this juncture the little bell rang, and the deep voice of Mrs. Prig struck into the conversation.

"Oh! You're a-talkin' about it, are you!" observed that lady. "Well, I hope you have got it over, for I ain't interested in it myself."

"My precious Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "how late you are!"

The worthy Mrs. Prig replied, with some asperity, "that if perverse people went off dead, when they was least expected, it warn't no fault of her'n." And further, "that it was quite aggravation enough to be made late when one was dropping for one's tea, without hearing on it again."

Mrs. Gamp, deriving from this exhibition of repartee some clue to the state of Mrs. Prig's feelings, instantly conducted her up-stairs: deeming that the sight of pickled salmon might work a softening change.

But Betsey Prig expected pickled salmon. It was obvious that she did; for her first words, after glancing at the table, were:

"I know'd she wouldn't have a cucumber!"

Mrs. Gamp changed colour, and sat down upon the bedstead.

"Lord bless you, Betsey Prig, your words is true. I quite forgot it!"

Mrs. Prig, looking steadfastly at her friend, put her hand in her pocket, and with an air of surly triumph, drew forth either the oldest of

lettuces or youngest of cabbages, but at any rate, a green vegetable of an expansive nature, and of such magnificent proportions that she was obliged to shut it up like an umbrella before she could pull it out. She also produced a handful of mustard and cress, a trifle of the herb called dandelion, three bunches of radishes, an onion rather larger than an average turnip, three substantial slices of beet root, and a short prong or antler of celery; the whole of this garden-stuff having been publicly exhibited, but a short time before, as a twopenny salad, and purchased by Mrs. Prig, on condition that the vendor could get it all into her pocket. Which had been happily accomplished, in High Holborn, to the breathless interest of a hackney-coach stand. And she laid so little stress on this surprising forethought, that she did not even smile, but returning her pocket into its accustomed sphere, merely recommended that these productions of nature should be sliced up, for immediate consumption, in plenty of vinegar.

"And don't go a dropping none of your snuff in it," said Mrs. Prig. "In gruel, barley-water, apple-tea, mutton-broth, and that, it don't signify. It stimulates a patient. But I don't relish it myself."

"Why, Betsey Prig!" cried Mrs. Gamp, "how *can* you talk so!"

"Why, ain't your patients, wotever their diseases is, always a sneezin' their very heads off, along of your snuff?" said Mrs. Prig.

"And wot if they are!" said Mrs. Gamp.

"Nothing if they are," said Mrs. Prig. "But don't deny it, Sairah."

"Who deniges of it?" Mrs. Gamp inquired.

Mrs. Prig returned no answer.

"Who deniges of it, Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp inquired again. Then Mrs. Gamp, by reversing the question, imparted a deeper and more awful character of solemnity to the same. "Betsey, who deniges of it?"

It was the nearest possible approach to a very decided difference of opinion between these ladies; but Mrs. Prig's impatience for the meal being greater at the moment than her impatience of contradiction, she replied, for the present, "Nobody, if you don't, Sairah," and prepared herself for tea. For a quarrel can be taken up at any time, but a limited quantity of salmon cannot.

Her toilet was simple. She had merely to "chuck" her bonnet and shawl upon the bed: give her hair two pulls, one upon the right side and one upon the left, as if she were ringing a couple of bells; and all was done. The tea was already made, Mrs. Gamp was not long

over the salad, and they were soon at the height of their repast.

The temper of both parties was improved, for the time being, by the enjoyments of the table. When the meal came to a termination (which it was pretty long in doing), and Mrs. Gamp having cleared away, produced the tea-pot from the top shelf, simultaneously with a couple of wine-glasses, they were quite amiable.

"Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, filling her own glass, and passing the tea-pot, "I will now propose a toast. My frequent pardner, Betsey Prig!"

"Which, altering the name to Sairah Gamp, I drink," said Mrs. Prig, "with love and tenderness."

From this moment symptoms of inflammation began to lurk in the nose of each lady; and perhaps, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, in the temper also.

"Now Sairah," said Mrs. Prig, "joining business with pleasure, wot is this case in which you wants me?"

Mrs. Gamp betraying in her face some intention of returning an evasive answer, Betsey added:

"Is it Mrs. Harris!"

"No, Betsey Prig, it ain't," was Mrs. Gamp's reply.

"Well!" said Mrs. Prig, with a short laugh. "I'm glad of that, at any rate."

"Why should you be glad of that, Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp retorted, warmly. "She is unbeknown to you except by hearsay, why should you be glad? If you have anythink to say contrary to the character of Mrs. Harris, which well I knows behind her back, afore her face, or anywheres, is not to be impeaged, out with it, Betsey. I have know'd that sweetest and best of women," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head, and shedding tears, "ever since afore her First, which Mr. Harris who was dreadful timid went and stopped his ears in a empty dog-kennel, and never took his hands away or come out once till he was showed the baby, wen bein' took with fits, the doctor collared him and laid him on his back upon the airy stones, and she was told to ease her mind, his owls was organs. And I have know'd her, Betsey Prig, wen he has hurt her feelin' art by sayin' of his Ninth that it was one too many, if not two, while that dear innocent was cooin' in his face, which thrive it did though bandy, but I have never know'd as you had occasion to be glad, Betsey, on accounts of Mrs. Harris not requiring you. Require she never will, depend upon it, for her constant words in sickness is, and will be, 'Send for Sairey!'"

During this touching address, Mrs. Prig adroitly feigning to be the victim of that absence of mind which has its origin in excessive attention to one topic, helped herself from the tea-pot without appearing to observe it. Mrs. Gamp observed it, however, and came to a premature close in consequence.

"Well it ain't her, it seems," said Mrs. Prig, coldly: "who is it then?"

"You have heerd me mention, Betsey," Mrs. Gamp replied, after glancing in an expressive and marked manner at the tea-pot, "a person as I took care on at the time as you and me was pardners off and on, in that there fever at the Bull?"

"Old Snuffey," Mrs. Prig observed.

Sarah Gamp looked at her with an eye of fire, for she saw in this mistake of Mrs. Prig, another wilful and malignant stab at that same weakness or custom of hers, an ungenerous allusion to which, on the part of Betsey, had first disturbed their harmony that evening. And she saw it still more clearly, when, politely but firmly correcting that lady by the distinct enunciation of the word "Chuffey," Mrs. Prig received the correction with a diabolical laugh.

The best among us have their failings, and it must be conceded of Mrs. Prig, that if there were a blemish in the goodness of her disposition, it was a habit she had of not bestowing all its sharp and acid properties upon her patients (as a thoroughly amiable woman would have done), but of keeping a considerable remainder for the service of her friends. Highly pickled salmon, and lettuces chopped up in vinegar, may, as viands possessing some acidity of their own, have encouraged and increased this failing in Mrs. Prig; and every application to the tea-pot, certainly did; for it was often remarked of her by her friends, that she was most contradictory when most elevated. It is certain that her countenance became about this time derisive and defiant, and that she sat with her arms folded, and one eye shut up, in a somewhat offensive, because obtrusively intelligent, manner.

Mrs. Gamp observing this, felt it the more necessary that Mrs. Prig should know her place, and be made sensible of her exact station in society, as well as of her obligations to herself. She therefore assumed an air of greater patronage and importance, as she went on to answer Mrs. Prig a little more in detail.

"Mr. Chuffey, Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "is weak in his mind. Excuse me if I makes remark, that he may neither be so weak as people thinks, nor people may not think he is so weak as they pretends, and what I knows, I knows;

and what you don't, you don't; so do not ask me, Betsey. But Mr. Chuffey's friends has made propojals for his bein' took care on, and has said to me, 'Mrs. Gamp, *will* you undertake it? We couldn't think,' they says, 'of trusting him to nobody but you, for, Sairey, you are gold as has passed the furnace. Will you undertake it, at your own price, day and night, and by your own self?' 'No,' I says, 'I will not. Do not reckon on it. There is,' I says, 'but one creetur in the world as I would undertake on sech terms, and her name is Harris. But,' I says, 'I am acquainted with a friend, whose name is Betsey Prig, that I can recommend, and will assist me. Betsey,' I says, 'is always to be trusted under me, and will be guided as I could desire.'

Here Mrs. Prig, without any abatement of her offensive manner, again counterfeited abstraction of mind, and stretched out her hand to the tea-pot. It was more than Mrs. Gamp could bear. She stopped the hand of Mrs. Prig with her own, and said, with great feeling:

"No, Betsey! Drink fair, wotever you do!"

Mrs. Prig, thus baffled, threw herself back in her chair, and closing the same eye more emphatically, and folding her arms tighter, suffered her head to roll slowly from side to side, while she surveyed her friend with a contemptuous smile.

Mrs. Gamp resumed:

"Mrs. Harris, Betsey—"

"Bother Mrs. Harris!" said Betsey Prig.

Mrs. Gamp looked at her with amazement, incredulity, and indignation; when Mrs. Prig, shutting her eye still closer, and folding her arms still tighter, uttered these memorable and tremendous words:

"I don't believe there's no sich a person!"

After the utterance of which expressions, she leaned forward, and snapped her fingers once, twice, thrice; each time nearer to the face of Mrs. Gamp; and then rose to put on her bonnet, as one who felt that there was now a gulf between them, which nothing could ever bridge across.

The shock of this blow was so violent and sudden, that Mrs. Gamp sat staring at nothing with uplifted eyes, and her mouth open as if she were gasping for breath, until Betsey Prig had put on her bonnet and her shawl, and was gathering the latter about her throat. Then Mrs. Gamp rose—morally and physically rose—and denounced her.

"What!" said Mrs. Gamp, "you bage creetur, have I know'd Mrs. Harris five and thirty year, to be told at last that there ain't no sech a

person livin'! Have I stood her friend in all her troubles, great and small, for it to come at last to sech a end as this, which her own sweet picter hanging up afore you all the time to shame your Bragian words! But well you mayn't believe there's no sech a creetur, for she wouldn't demean herself to look at you, and often has she said, when I have made mention of your name, which, to my sinful sorrow, I have done, 'What, Sairey Gamp! debage yourself to *her*!' Go along with you!"

"I'm a goin', ma'am, ain't I?" said Mrs. Prig, stopping as she said it.

"You had better, ma'am," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Do you know who you're talking to, ma'am?" inquired her visitor.

"Aperiently," said Mrs. Gamp, surveying her with scorn from head to foot, "to Betsey Prig. Aperiently so. I know her. No one better. Go along with you!"

"And *you* was a going to take me under you!" cried Mrs. Prig, surveying Mrs. Gamp from head to foot in her turn. "*You* was, was you! Oh, how kind! Why, deuce take your imperence," said Mrs. Prig, with a rapid change from banter to ferocity, "what do you mean!"

"Go along with you!" said Mrs. Gamp. "I blush for you."

"You had better blush a little for yourself, while you *are* about it!" said Mrs. Prig. "You and your Chuffeys! What, the poor old creetur isn't mad enough, isn't he? Aha!"

"He'd very soon be mad enough, if you had anythink to do with him," said Mrs. Gamp.

"And that's what I was wanted for, is it?" cried Mrs. Prig, triumphantly. "Yes. But you'll find yourself deceived. I won't go near him. We shall see how you get on without me. I won't have nothink to do with him."

"You never spoke a truer word than that!" said Mrs. Gamp. "Go along with you!"

She was prevented from witnessing the actual retirement of Mrs. Prig from the room, notwithstanding the great desire she had expressed to behold it, by that lady, in her angry withdrawal, coming into contact with the bedstead, and bringing down the previously-mentioned pippins; three or four of which came rattling on the head of Mrs. Gamp so smartly, that when she recovered from this wooden shower-bath, Mrs. Prig was gone.

She had the satisfaction, however, of hearing the deep voice of Betsey, proclaiming her injuries and her determination to have nothing to do with Mr. Chuffey, down the stairs, and along the passage, and even out in Kingsgate-street. Likewise of seeing in her own apart-

ment, in the place of Mrs. Prig, Mr. Sweedlepipe and two gentlemen.

"Why, bless my life!" exclaimed the little barber, "what's amiss? The noise you ladies have been making, Mrs. Gamp! Why, these two gentlemen have been standing on the stairs outside the door, nearly all the time, trying to make you hear, while you were pelting away, hammer and tongs! It'll be the death of the little bullfinch in the shop, that draws his own water. In his fright, he's been a straining himself all to bits, drawing more water than he could drink in a twelvemonth. He must have thought it was Fire!"

Mrs. Gamp had in the meanwhile sunk into her chair, from whence, turning up her overflowing eyes and clasping her hands, she delivered the following lamentation:

"Oh, Mr. Sweedlepipes, which Mr. Westlock also, if my eyes do not deceive, and a friend not havin' the pleasure of bein' beknown, wot I have took from Betsey Prig this blessed night, no mortal creetur knows? If she had abused me, bein' in liquor, which I thought I smelt her wen she come, but could not so believe, not bein' used myself"—Mrs. Gamp, by the way, was pretty far gone, and the fragrance of the tea-pot was strong in the room—"I could have bore it with a thankful art. But the words she spoke of Mrs. Harris, lambs could not forgive. No, Betsey!" said Mrs. Gamp, in a violent burst of feeling, "nor worms forget!"

The little barber scratched his head, and shook it, and looked at the tea-pot, and gradually got out of the room. John Westlock, taking a chair, sat down on one side of Mrs. Gamp. Martin, taking the foot of the bed, supported her on the other.

"You wonder what we want, I dare say," observed John. "I'll tell you presently, when you have recovered. It's not pressing, for a few minutes or so. How do you find yourself? Better?"

Mrs. Gamp shed more tears, shook her head, and feebly pronounced Mrs. Harris's name.

"Have a little—" John was at a loss what to call it.

"Tea," suggested Martin.

"It ain't tea," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Physic of some sort, I suppose," cried John. "Have a little."

Mrs. Gamp was prevailed upon to take a glassful. "On condition," she passionately observed, "as Betsey never has another stroke of work from me."

"Certainly not," said John. "She shall never help to nurse *me*."

"To think," said Mrs. Gamp, "as she should ever have helped to nuss that friend of yours, and been so near of hearing things that—Ah!"

John looked at Martin.

"Yes," he said. "That was a narrow escape, Mrs. Gamp."

"Narrer, in-deed!" she returned. "It was only my having the night, and bearin' of him in his wanderins; and her the day, that saved it. Wot would she have said and done, if she had know'd what I know; that perfeejus wretch! Yet, oh good gracious me!" cried Mrs. Gamp, trampling on the floor, in the absence of Mrs. Prig, "that I should hear from that same woman's lips what I have heerd her speak of Mrs. Harris!"

"Never mind," said John. "You know it is not true."

"Isn't true!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "True! Don't I know as that dear woman is expecting of me at this minit, Mr. Westlock, and is a lookin' out of window down the street, with little Tommy Harris in her arms, as calls me his own Gammy, and truly calls, for bless the mottled litle legs of that there precious child (like Canterbury Brawn his own dear father says, which so they are) his own I have been, ever since I found him, Mr. Westlock, with his small red worsted shoe a gurglin' in his throat, where he had put it in his play, a chick, while they was leavin' of him on the floor a looking for it through the ouse and him a choakin' sweetly in the parlor! Oh, Betsey Prig, what wickedness you've showed this night, but never shall you darken Sairey's doorsagen, you twining serpiant!"

"You were always so kind to her, too!" said John, consolingly.

"That's the cutting part. That's where it hurts me, Mr. Westlock," Mrs. Gamp replied; holding out her glass unconsciously, while Martin filled it.

"Chosen to help you with Mr. Lewsome!" said John, "Chosen to help you with Mr. Chuffey!"

"Chose once, but chose no more," cried Mrs. Gamp. "No partnership with Betsey Prig agen, sir!"

"No, no," said John. "That would never do."

"I don't know as it ever would have done, sir," Mrs. Gamp replied, with the solemnity peculiar to a certain stage of intoxication. "Now that the marks," by which Mrs. Gamp is supposed to have meant mask, "is off that creetur's face, I do not think it ever would have done. There are reagions in families for keepin' things a secret, Mr. Westlock, and havin'

only them about you as you knows you can repose in. Who could repose in Betsey Prig, arter her words of Mrs. Harris, setting in that chair afore my eyes!"

"Quite true," said John: "quite. I hope you have time to find another assistant, Mrs. Gamp?"

Between her indignation and the tea-pot, her powers of comprehending what was said to her began to fail. She looked at John with tearful eyes, and murmuring the well-remembered name which Mrs. Prig had challenged—as if it were a talisman against all earthly sorrows—seemed to wander in her mind.

"I hope," repeated John, "that you have time to find another assistant?"

"Which short it is, indeed," cried Mrs. Gamp, turning up her languid eyes, and clasping Mr. Westlock's wrist with matronly affection. "Tomorrow evenin', sir, I waits upon his friends. Mr. Chuzzlewit apinted it from nine to ten."

"From nine to ten," said John, with a significant glance at Martin; "and then Mr. Chuffey retires into safe keeping, does he?"

"He needs to be kep safe, I do assure you," Mrs. Gamp replied, with a mysterious air. "Other people besides me has had a happy delivrance from Betsey Prig. I little know'd that woman. She'd have let it out!"

"Let *him* out, you mean," said John.

"Do I!" retorted Mrs. Gamp. "Oh!"

The severely ironical character of this reply was strengthened by a very slow nod, and a still slower drawing down of the corners of Mrs. Gamp's mouth. She added with extreme stateliness of manner, after indulging in a short doze:

"But I am a keepin' of you gentlemen, and time is precious."

Mingling with that delusion of the tea-pot which inspired her with the belief that they wanted her to go somewhere immediately, a shrewd avoidance of any further reference to the topics into which she had lately strayed, Mrs. Gamp rose; and putting away the tea-pot, in its accustomed place, and locking the cupboard with much gravity, proceeded to attire herself for a professional visit.

This preparation was easily made, as it required nothing more than the snuffy black bonnet, the snuffy black shawl, the pattens, and the indispensable umbrella, without which neither a lying-in nor a laying-out could by any possibility be attempted. When Mrs. Gamp had invested herself with these appendages she returned to her chair, and sitting down again, declared herself quite ready.

"It's a happiness to know as one can benefit the poor sweet creatur," she observed, "I'm sure. It isn't all as can. The torters Betsey Prig inflicts is frightful."

Closing her eyes as she made this remark, in the acuteness of her commiseration for Betsey's patients, she forgot to open them again until she dropped a patten. Her nap was also broken at intervals, like the fabled slumbers of Friar Bacon, by the dropping of the other patten, and of the umbrella; but when she had got rid of these incumbances, her sleep was peaceful.

The two young men looked at each other, ludicrously enough; and Martin, stifling his disposition to laugh, whispered in John Westlock's ear:

"What shall we do now?"

"Stay here," he replied.

Mrs. Gamp was heard to murmur "Mrs. Harris" in her sleep.

"Rely upon it," whispered John, looking cautiously towards her, "that you shall question this old clerk, though you go as Mrs. Harris herself. We know quite enough to carry her our own way now, at all events; thanks to this quarrel, which confirms the old saying that, when rogues fall out, honest people get what they want. Let Jonas Chuzzlewit look to himself; and let her sleep as long as she likes. We shall gain our end in good time."

CHAPTER L.

SURPRISES TOM PINCH VERY MUCH, AND SHOWS HOW CERTAIN CONFIDENCES PASSED BETWEEN HIM AND HIS SISTER.



IT was the next evening; and Tom and his sister were sitting together before tea, talking, in their usual quiet way, about a great many things, but not at all about Lewsome's story or anything connected with it; for John Westlock—really John, for so young a man, was one of the mos. considerate fellows in the world—had particularly advised Tom not to mention it to his sister just yet, in case it should disquiet her. "And I wouldn't, Tom," he said, with a little hesitation, "I wouldn't have a shadow on her happy face, or an uneasy thought in her gentle heart, for all the wealth and honours of the universe!" Really John was uncommonly kind; extraordinarily kind. If he had been her father, Tom said, he could not have taken a greater interest in her.

But although Tom and his sister were extremely conversational, they were less lively, and less cheerful, than usual. Tom had no idea that this originated with Ruth, but took it for granted that he was rather dull himself. In truth he was; for the lightest cloud upon the Heaven of her quiet mind, cast its shadow upon Tom.

And there was a cloud on little Ruth that evening. Yes, indeed. When Tom was looking in another direction, her bright eyes, stealing on

towards his face, would sparkle still more brightly than their custom was, and then grow dim. When Tom was silent, looking out upon the summer weather, she would sometimes make a hasty movement, as if she were about to throw herself upon his neck; then check the impulse, and when he looked round, show a laughing face, and speak to him very merrily. When she had anything to give Tom, or had any excuse for coming near him, she would flutter about him, and lay her bashful hand upon his shoulder,



"THEN MRS. GAMP ROSE—MORALLY AND PHYSICALLY ROSE—AND DENOUNCED HER."

and not be willing to withdraw it; and would show by all such means that there was something on her heart which in her great love she longed to say to him, but had not the courage to utter.

So they were sitting, she with her work before her, but not working, and Tom with his book beside him, but not reading, when Martin knocked at the door. Anticipating who it was, Tom went to open it; and he and Martin came back into the room together. Tom looked surprised, for in answer to his cordial greeting

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 25.

Martin had hardly spoken a word. Ruth also saw that there was something strange in the manner of their visitor, and raised her eyes inquiringly to Tom's face, as if she were seeking an explanation there. Tom shook his head, and made the same mute appeal to Martin.

Martin did not sit down, but walked up to the window, and stood there, looking out. He turned round after a few moments to speak, but hastily averted his head again, without doing so.

"What has happened, Martin?" Tom anx-

iously inquired. "My dear fellow, what bad news do you bring?"

"Oh Tom!" replied Martin, in a tone of deep reproach. "To hear you feign that interest in anything that happens to me, hurts me more than your ungenerous dealing."

"My ungenerous dealing! Martin! My—" Tom could say no more.

"How could you, Tom, how could you suffer me to thank you so fervently and sincerely for your friendship; and not tell me, like a man, that you had deserted me! Was it true, Tom! Was it honest! Was it worthy of what you used to be: of what I am sure you used to be: to tempt me, when you had turned against me, into pouring out my heart! Oh Tom!"

His tone was one of such strong injury and yet of so much grief for the loss of a friend he had trusted in; it expressed such high past love for Tom, and so much sorrow and compassion for his supposed unworthiness; that Tom, for a moment, put his hand before his face, and had no more power of justifying himself, than if he had been a monster of deceit and falsehood.

"I protest, as I must die," said Martin, "that I grieve over the loss of what I thought you; and have no anger in the recollection of my own injuries. It is only at such a time, and after such a discovery, that we know the full measure of our old regard for the subject of it. I swear, little as I showed it; little as I know I showed it; that when I had the least consideration for you, Tom, I loved you like a brother."

Tom was composed by this time, and might have been the Spirit of Truth, in a homely dress—it very often wears a homely dress, thank God!—when he replied to him.

"Martin," he said, "I don't know what is in your mind, or who has abused it, or by what extraordinary means. But the means are false. There is no truth whatever in the impression under which you labour. It is a delusion from first to last; and I warn you that you will deeply regret the wrong you do me. I can honestly say that I have been true to you, and to myself. You will be very sorry for this. Indeed, you will be very sorry for it, Martin."

"I am sorry," returned Martin, shaking his head. "I think I never knew what it was to be sorry in my heart, until now."

"At least," said Tom, "if I had always been what you charged me with being now, and had never had a place in your regard, but had always been despised by you, and had always deserved it, you should tell me in what you have found me to be treacherous; and on what grounds you proceed. I do not entreat you, therefore,

to give me that satisfaction as a favour, Martin; but I ask it of you as a right."

"My own eyes are my witnesses," returned Martin. "Am I to believe them?"

"No," said Tom, calmly. "Not if they accuse me."

"Your own words. Your own manner," pursued Martin. "Am I to believe *them*?"

"No," replied Tom, calmly. "Not if they accuse me. But they never have accused me. Whoever has perverted them to such a purpose, has wronged me, almost as cruelly;" his calmness rather failed him here; "as you have done."

"I came here," said Martin; "and I appeal to your good sister to hear me—"

"Not to her," interrupted Tom. "Pray, do not appeal to her. She will never believe you."

He drew her arm through his own, as he said it.

"I believe it, Tom!"

"No, no," cried Tom, "of course not. I said so. Why, tut, tut, tut. What a silly little thing you are!"

"I never meant," said Martin, hastily, "to appeal to you against your brother. Do not think me so unmanly and unkind. I merely appealed to you to hear my declaration, that I came here for no purpose of reproach—I have not one reproach to vent—but in deep regret. You could not know in what bitterness of regret, unless you knew how often I have thought of Tom; how long in almost hopeless circumstances, I have looked forward to the better estimation of his friendship; and how steadfastly I have believed and trusted in him."

"Tut, tut," said Tom, stopping her as she was about to speak. "He is mistaken. He is deceived. Why should you mind? He is sure to be set right at last."

"Heaven bless the day that sets me right!" cried Martin, "if it could ever come!"

"Amen!" said Tom. "And it will!"

Martin paused: and then said in a still milder voice:

"You have chosen for yourself, Tom, and will be relieved by our parting. It is not an angry one. There is no anger on my side—"

"There is none on mine," said Tom.

"—It is merely what you have brought about, and worked to bring about. I say again, you have chosen for yourself. You have made the choice that might have been expected in most people situated as you are, but which I did not expect in you. For that, perhaps, I should blame my own judgment more than you. There is wealth and favour worth having, on one side; and there is the worthless friendship of an

abandoned, struggling fellow, on the other. You were free to make your election, and you made it; and the choice was not difficult. But those who have not the courage to resist such temptations, should have the courage to avow that they have yielded to them; and I *do* blame you for this, Tom: that you received me with a show of warmth, encouraged me to be frank and plain-spoken, tempted me to confide in you, and professed that you were able to be mine; when you had sold yourself to others. I do not believe," said Martin, with emotion: "hear me say it from my heart; I *cannot* believe, Tom, now that I am standing face to face with you, that it would have been in your nature to do me any serious harm, even though I had not discovered, by chance, in whose employment you were. But I should have encumbered you; I should have led you into more double-dealing; I should have hazarded your retaining the favour for which you have paid so high a price, bartering away your former self; and it is best for both of us that I have found out what you so much desired to keep secret."

"Be just," said Tom; who had not removed his mild gaze from Martin's face since the commencement of this last address; "be just, even in your injustice, Martin. You forget. You have not yet told me what your accusation is!"

"Why should I?" returned Martin, waving his hand, and moving towards the door. "You could not know it the better for my dwelling on it, and though' it would be really none the worse, it might seem to me to be. No, Tom. Bygones shall be bygones between us. I can take leave of you at this moment, and in this place: in which you are so amiable and so good: as heartily, if not as cheerfully, as ever I have done since we first met. All good go with you, Tom! —I—"

"You leave me so? You can leave me so, can you?" said Tom.

"I—you—you have chosen for yourself, Tom! I—I hope it was a rash choice," Martin faltered. "I think it was. I am sure it was! Good bye!"

And he was gone.

Tom led his little sister to her chair, and sat down in his own. He took his book, and read, or seemed to read. Presently he said aloud: turning a leaf as he spoke: "He will be very sorry for this." And a tear stole down his face, and dropped upon the page.

Ruth nestled down beside him on her knees, and clasped her arms about his neck.

"No, Tom! No no! Be comforted! Dear Tom!"

"I am quite—comforted," said Tom. "It will be set right."

"Such a cruel, bad return!" cried Ruth.

"No, no," said Tom. "He believes it. I cannot imagine why. But it will be set right."

More closely yet, she nestled down about him; and wept as if her heart would break.

"Don't. Don't," said Tom. "Why do you hide your face, my dear!"

Then in a burst of tears, it all broke out at last.

"Oh Tom, dear Tom, I know your secret heart. I have found it out; you couldn't hide the truth from me. Why didn't you tell me? I am sure I could have made you happier, if you had! You love her Tom, so dearly!"

Tom made a motion with his hand as if he would have put his sister hurriedly away; but it clasped upon hers, and all his little history was written in the action. All its pathetic eloquence was in the silent touch.

"In spite of that," said Ruth, "you have been so faithful and so good, dear; in spite of that, you have been so true and self-denying, and have struggled with yourself; in spite of that, you have been so gentle, and so kind, and even-tempered, that I have never seen you give a hasty look, or heard you say one irritable word. In spite of all, you have been so cruelly mistaken. Oh Tom, dear Tom, will *this* be set right too! Will it, Tom? Will you always have this sorrow in your breast: you who deserve to be so happy: or is there any hope!"

And still she hid her face from Tom, and clasped him round the neck, and wept for him, and poured out all her woman's heart and soul in the relief and pain of this disclosure.

It was not very long before she and Tom were sitting side by side, and she was looking with an earnest quietness in Tom's face. Then Tom spoke to her thus: cheerily, though gravely.

"I am very glad, my dear, that this has passed between us. Not because it assures me of your tender affection (for I was well assured of that before), but because it relieves my mind of a great weight."

Tom's eyes glistened when he spoke of her affection; and he kissed her on the cheek.

"My dear girl," said Tom: "with whatever feeling I regard her;" they seemed to avoid the name by mutual consent; "I have long ago—I am sure I may say from the very first—looked upon it as a dream. As something that might possibly have happened under very different circumstances, but which can never be. Now tell me. What would you have set right?"

She gave Tom such a significant little look, that he was obliged to take it for an answer whether he would or no: and to go on.

"By her own choice and free consent, my love, she is betrothed to Martin; and was, long before either of them knew of my existence. You would have her betrothed to me?"

"Yes," she said directly.

"Yes," rejoined Tom, "but that might be setting it wrong, instead of right. Do you think," said Tom, with a grave smile, "that even if she had never seen him, it is very likely she would have fallen in love with Me?"

"Why not, dear Tom?"

Tom shook his head, and smiled again.

"You think of me, Ruth," said Tom, "and it is very natural that you should, as if I were a character in a book; and you make it a sort of poetical justice that I should, by some impossible means or other, come, at last, to marry the person I love. But there is a much higher justice than poetical justice, my dear, and it does not order events upon the same principle. Accordingly, people who read about heroes in books, and choose to make heroes of themselves out of books, consider it a very fine thing to be discontented and gloomy, and misanthropical, and perhaps a little blasphemous, because they cannot have everything ordered for their individual accommodation. Would you like me to become one of that sort of people?"

"No, Tom. But still I know," she added timidly, "that this is a sorrow to you in your own better way."

Tom thought of disputing the position. But it would have been mere folly, and he gave it up.

"My dear," said Tom, "I will repay your affection with the Truth, and all the Truth. It is a sorrow to me. I have proved it to be so sometimes, though I have always striven against it. But somebody who is precious to you may die, and you may dream that you are in heaven with the departed spirit, and you may find it a sorrow to wake to the life on earth, which is no harder to be borne than when you fell asleep. It is sorrowful to me to contemplate my dream, which I always knew was a dream, even when it first presented itself; but the realities about me are not to blame. They are the same as they were. My sister, my sweet companion, who makes this place so dear, is she less devoted to me, Ruth, than she would have been, if this vision had never troubled me? My old friend John, who might so easily have treated me with coldness and neglect, is he less cordial to me? The world about me, is there less good in that?"

Are my words to be harsh and my looks to be sour, and is my heart to grow cold, because there has fallen in my way a good and beautiful creature, who, but for the selfish regret that I cannot call her my own, would, like all other good and beautiful creatures, make me happier and better! No, my dear sister. No," said Tom stoutly. "Remembering all my means of happiness, I hardly dare to call this lurking something, a sorrow; but whatever name it may justly bear, I thank Heaven that it renders me more sensible of affection and attachment, and softens me in fifty ways. Not less happy. Not less happy, Ruth!"

She could not speak to him, but she loved him, as he well deserved. Even as he deserved, she loved him.

"She will open Martin's eyes," said Tom, with a glow of pride, "and that (which is indeed wrong) will be set right. Nothing will persuade her, I know, that I have betrayed him. It will be set right through her, and he will be very sorry for it. Our secret, Ruth, is our own, and lives and dies with us. I don't believe I ever could have told it you," said Tom, with a smile, "but how glad I am to think you have found it out!"

They had never taken such a pleasant walk as they took that night. Tom told her all so freely, and so simply, and was so desirous to return her tenderness with his fullest confidence, that they prolonged it far beyond their usual hour, and sat up late when they came home. And when they parted for the night, there was such a tranquil, beautiful expression in Tom's face, that she could not bear to shut it out, but going back on tip-toe to his chamber-door, looked in, and stood there till he saw her, and then embracing him again, withdrew. And in her prayers, and in her sleep—good times to be remembered with such fervour, Tom!—his name was uppermost.

When he was left alone, Tom pondered very much on this discovery of hers, and greatly wondered what had led her to it. "Because," thought Tom, "I have been so very careful. It was foolish and unnecessary in me, as I clearly see now, when I am so relieved by her knowing it; but I have been so very careful to conceal it from her. Of course I knew that she was intelligent and quick, and for that reason was more upon my guard: but I was not in the least prepared for this. I am sure her discovery has been sudden too. Dear me!" said Tom. "It's a most singular instance of penetration!"

Tom could not get it out of his head. There it was, when his head was on his pillow.

"How she trembled when she began to tell me she knew it!" thought Tom, recalling all the little incidents and circumstances; "and how her face flushed! But that was natural. Oh, quite natural! That needs no accounting for."

Tom little thought how natural it was. Tom little knew that there was that in Ruth's own heart, but newly set there, which had helped her to the reading of his mystery. Ah, Tom! He didn't understand the whispers of the Temple Fountain, though he passed it every day.

Who so lively and cheerful as busy Ruth next morning! Her early tap at Tom's door, and her light foot outside, would have been music to him though she had not spoken. But she said it was the brightest morning ever seen; and so it was; and if it had been otherwise, she would have made it so to Tom.

She was ready with his neat breakfast when he went down-stairs, and had her bonnet ready for the early walk, and was so full of news, that Tom was lost in wonder. She might have been up all night, collecting it for his entertainment. There was Mr. Nadgett not come home yet, and there was bread down a penny a loaf, and there was twice as much strength in this tea as in the last, and the milk-woman's husband had come out of the hospital cured, and the curly-headed child over the way had been lost all yesterday, and she was going to make all sorts of preserves in a desperate hurry, and there happened to be a saucepan in the house which was the very saucepan for the purpose; and she knew all about the last book Tom had brought home, all through, though it was a teaser to read; and she had so much to tell him that she had finished breakfast first. Then she had her little bonnet on, and the tea and sugar locked up, and the keys in her reticule, and the flower, as usual, in Tom's coat, and was in all respects quite ready to accompany him, before Tom knew she had begun to prepare. And in short, as Tom said, with a confidence in his own assertion, which amounted to a defiance of the public in general, there never was such a little woman.

She made Tom talkative. It was impossible to resist her. She put such enticing questions to him; about books, and about dates of churches, and about organs, and about the Temple, and about all kinds of things. Indeed, she lightened the way (and Tom's heart with it) to that degree, that the Temple looked quite blank and solitary, when he parted from her at the gate.

"No Mr. Fips's friend to-day, I suppose," thought Tom, as he ascended the stairs.

Not yet, at any rate, for the door was closed as usual, and Tom opened it with his key. He had got the books into perfect order now, and had mended the torn leaves, and pasted up the broken backs, and substituted neat labels for the worn-out letterings. It looked a different place, it was so orderly and neat. Tom felt some pride in contemplating the change he had wrought, though there was no one to approve or disapprove of it.

He was at present occupied in making a fair copy of his draft of the catalogue; on which, as there was no hurry, he was painfully concentrating all the ingenious and laborious neatness he had ever expended on map or plan in Mr. Pecksniff's workroom. It was a very marvel of a catalogue; for Tom sometimes thought he was really getting his money too easily, and he had determined within himself that this document should take a little of his superfluous leisure out of him.

So, with pens and ruler, and compasses and india-rubber, and pencil, and black ink, and red ink, Tom worked away all the morning. He thought a good deal about Martin and their interview of yesterday, and would have been far easier in his mind if he could have resolved to confide it to his friend John, and to have taken his opinion on the subject. But besides that he knew what John's boiling indignation would be, he bethought himself that he was helping Martin now in a matter of great moment, and that to deprive the latter of his assistance at such a crisis of affairs, would be to inflict a serious injury upon him.

"So I'll keep it to myself," said Tom, with a sigh. "I'll keep it to myself."

And to work he went again, more assiduously than ever, with the pens, and the ruler, and the india-rubber, and the pencil, and the black ink, and the red ink, that he might forget it.

He had laboured away for another hour or more, when he heard a footstep in the entry, down below.

"Ah!" said Tom, looking towards the door, "time was, not long ago either, when that would have set me wondering and expecting. But I have left off now."

The footstep came on, up the stairs.

"Thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight," said Tom, counting. "Now you'll stop. Nobody ever comes past the thirty-eighth stair."

The person did stop, certainly, but only to take breath; for up the footstep came again. Forty, forty-one, forty-two, and so on.

The door stood open. As the tread advanced, Tom looked impatiently and eagerly towards it. When a figure came upon the landing, and arriving in the doorway, stopped and gazed at him, he rose up from his chair, and half believed he saw a spirit.

Old Martin Chuzzlewit. The same whom he had left at Mr. Pecksniff's, weak and sinking.

The same! No, not the same: for this old man, though old, was strong, and leaned upon his stick with a vigorous hand, while with the other he signed to Tom to make no noise. One glance at the resolute face, the watchful eye, the vigorous hand upon the staff, the triumphant purpose in the figure, and such a light broke in on Tom as blinded him.

"You have expected me," said Martin, "a long time."

"I was told that my employer would arrive soon," said Tom; "but——"

"I know. You were ignorant who he was. It was my desire. I am glad it has been so well observed. I intended to have been with you much sooner. I thought the time had come. I thought I could know no more, and no worse of him, than I did on that day when I saw you last. But I was wrong."

He had by this time come up to Tom, and now he grasped his hand.

"I have lived in his house, Pinch, and had him fawning on me days and weeks, and months. You know it. I have suffered him to treat me like his tool and instrument. You know it; you have seen me there. I have undergone ten thousand times as much as I could have endured if I had been the miserable weak old man he took me for. You know it. I have seen him offer love to Mary. You know it; who better—who better, my true heart! I have had his base soul bare before me, day by day, and have not betrayed myself once. I never could have undergone such torture but for looking forward to this time."

He stopped, even in the passion of his speech; if that can be called passion which was so resolute and steady; to press Tom's hand again. Then he said, in great excitement:

"Close the door; close the door. He will not be long after me, but may come too soon. The time now drawing on," said the old man, hurriedly: his eyes and whole face brightening as he spoke: "will make amends for all. I wouldn't have him die or hang himself for millions of golden pieces! Close the door."

Tom did so; hardly knowing yet whether he was awake, or in a dream.

CHAPTER LI.

SHEDS NEW AND BRIGHTER LIGHT UPON THE VERY DARK PLACE; AND CONTAINS THE SEQUEL OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.



HE night had now come when the old clerk was to be delivered over to his keepers. In the midst of his guilty distractions, Jonas had not forgotten it.

It was a part of his guilty state of mind to remember it; for on his persistence in the scheme depended one of his precautions for his own safety. A hint, a word, from the old man, uttered at such a moment in attentive ears, might fire the train of suspicion, and destroy him. His watchfulness of every avenue by which the discovery of his guilt might be approached, sharpened with his sense of the danger by which he was encompassed. With murder on his soul, and its innumerable alarms and terrors dragging at him night and day, he would have repeated the crime, if he had seen a path of safety stretching out beyond. It was in his punishment; it was in his guilty condition. The very deed which his fears rendered insupportable, his fears would have impelled him to commit again.

But keeping the old man close, according to his design, would serve his turn. His purpose was, to escape, when the first alarm and wonder had subsided: and when he could make the attempt without awakening instant suspicion. In the meanwhile these women would keep him quiet; and if the talking humour came upon him, would not be easily startled. He knew their trade.

Nor had he spoken idly when he said the old man should be gagged. He had resolved to ensure his silence; and he looked to the end, not the means. He had been rough and rude and cruel to the old man all his life; and violence was natural to his mind in connection with him. "He shall be gagged if he speaks, and pinioned if he writes," said Jonas, looking at him; for they sat alone together. "He is mad enough for that; I'll go through with it."

Hush!

Still listening! To every sound. He had listened ever since, and it had not come yet. The exposure of the Insurance office; the flight of Crimple and Ballamy with the plunder, and among the rest, as he feared, with his own bill, which he had not found in the pocket-book of the murdered man, and which with Mr. Pecksniff's money had probably been remitted

to one or other of those trusty friends for safe deposit at the banker's; his immense losses, and peril of being still called to account as a partner in the broken firm; all these things rose in his mind at one time and always, but he could not contemplate them. He was aware of their presence, and of the rage, discomfiture, and despair, they brought along with them; but he thought—of his own controlling power and direction he thought—of the one dread question only. When they would find the body in the wood.

He tried—he had never left off trying—not to forget it was there, for that was impossible, but to forget to weary himself by drawing vivid pictures of it in his fancy: by going softly about it and about it among the leaves, approaching it nearer and nearer through a gap in the boughs, and startling the very flies that were thickly sprinkled all over it, like heaps of dried currants. His mind was fixed and fastened on the discovery, for intelligence of which he listened intently to every cry and shout; listened when any one came in, or went out; watched from the window the people who passed up and down the street; and mistrusted his own looks and words. And the more his thoughts were set upon the discovery, the stronger was the fascination which attracted them to the thing itself: lying alone in the wood. He was for ever showing and presenting it, as it were, to every creature whom he saw. "Look here! Do you know of this? Is it found? Do you suspect *me*?" If he had been condemned to bear the body in his arms, and lay it down for recognition at the feet of every one he met, it could not have been more constantly with him, or a cause of more monotonous and dismal occupation than it was in this state of his mind.

Still he was not sorry. It was no contrition or remorse for what he had done that moved him; it was nothing but alarm for his own security. The vague consciousness he possessed of having wrecked his fortune in the murderous venture, intensified his hatred and revenge, and made him set the greater store by what he had gained. The man was dead; nothing could undo that. He felt a triumph yet, in the reflection.

He had kept a jealous watch on Chuffey, ever since the deed; seldom leaving him but on compulsion, and then for as short intervals as possible. They were alone together now. It was twilight, and the appointed time drew near at hand. Jonas walked up and down the room. The old man sat in his accustomed corner.

The slightest circumstance was matter of disquiet to the murderer, and he was made uneasy at this time by the absence of his wife, who had left home early in the afternoon, and had not returned yet. No tenderness for her was at the bottom of this; but he had a misgiving that she might have been waylaid, and tempted into saying something that would criminate him when the news came. For anything he knew, she might have knocked at the door of his room, while he was away, and discovered his plot. Confound her, it was like her pale face, to be wandering up and down the house! Where was she now?

"She went to her good friend, Mrs. Todgers," said the old man, when he asked the question with an angry oath.

Aye! To be sure! always stealing away into the company of that woman. She was no friend of his. Who could tell what devil's mischief they might hatch together! Let her be fetched home directly.

The old man, muttering some words softly, rose as if he would have gone himself, but Jonas thrust him back into his chair with an impatient imprecation, and sent a servant-girl to fetch her. When he had charged her with her errand he walked to and fro again, and never stopped till she came back, which she did pretty soon: the way being short, and the woman having made good haste.

Well! Where was she? Had she come?

No. She had left there, full three hours.

"Left there! Alone?"

The messenger had not asked; taking that for granted.

"Curse you for a fool. Bring candles!"

She had scarcely left the room, when the old clerk, who had been unusually observant of him ever since he had asked about his wife, came suddenly upon him.

"Give her up!" cried the old man. "Come! Give her up to me! Tell me what you have done with her. Quick! I have made no promises on that score. Tell me what you have done with her."

He laid his hands upon his collar as he spoke, and grasped it: tightly too.

"You shall not leave me!" cried the old man. "I am strong enough to cry out to the neighbours, and I will, unless you give her up. Give her up to me!"

Jonas was so dismayed and conscience-stricken, that he had not even hardihood enough to unclench the old man's hands with his own; but stood looking at him as well as he could in the darkness, without moving a finger. It was

as much as he could do to ask him what he meant.

"I will know what you have done with her!" retorted Chuffey. "If you hurt a hair of her head, you shall answer it. Poor thing! Poor thing! Where is she?"

"Why, you old madman!" said Jonas, in a low voice, and with trembling lips. "What Bedlam fit has come upon you now?"

"It is enough to make me mad, seeing what I have seen in this house!" cried Chuffey. "Where is my dear old master! Where is his only son that I have nursed upon my knee, a child! Where is she, she who was the last; she that I've seen pining day by day, and heard weeping in the dead of night! She was the last, the last of all my friends! Heaven help me, she was the very last!"

Seeing that the tears were stealing down his face, Jonas mustered courage to unclench his hands, and push him off before he answered:

"Did you hear me ask for her? Did you hear me send for her? How can I give you up what I haven't got, idiot! Ecod, I'd give her up to you and welcome, if I could; and a precious pair you'd be!"

"If she has come to any harm," cried Chuffey, "mind! I'm old and silly; but I have my memory sometimes; and if she has come to any harm—"

"Devil take you," interrupted Jonas, but in a suppressed voice still; "what harm do you suppose she has come to? I know no more where she is than you do; I wish I did. Wait till she comes home, and see: she can't be long. Will that content you?"

"Mind!" exclaimed the old man. "Not a hair of her head! not a hair of her head ill used! I won't bear it. I—I—have borne it too long, Jonas. I am silent, but I—I—I can speak. I—I—I can speak—" he stammered, as he crept back to his chair, and turned a threatening, though a feeble, look upon him.

"You can speak, can you!" thought Jonas. "So, so, we'll stop your speaking. It's well I knew of this in good time. Prevention is better than cure."

He had made a poor show of playing the Bully and evincing a desire to conciliate at the same time, but was so afraid of the old man that great drops had started out upon his brow; and they stood there yet. His unusual tone of voice and agitated manner had sufficiently expressed his fear; but his face would have done so now, without that aid, as he again walked to and fro, glancing at him by the candlelight.

He stopped at the window to think. An

opposite shop was lighted up; and the tradesman and a customer were reading some printed bill together across the counter. The sight brought him back, instantly, to the occupation he had forgotten. "Look here! Do you know of this? Is it found? Do you suspect *me*?"

A hand upon the door. "What's that?"

"A pleasant evenin'," said the voice of Mrs. Gamp, "though warm, which, bless you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, we must expect when cowcubers is three for twopence. How does Mr. Chuffey find his self to-night, sir?"

Mrs. Gamp kept particularly close to the door in saying this, and curtsied more than usual. She did not appear to be quite so much at her ease as she generally was.

"Get him to his room," said Jonas, walking up to her, and speaking in her ear. "He has been raving to-night—stark mad. Don't talk while he's here, but come down again."

"Poor sweet dear!" cried Mrs. Gamp, with uncommon tenderness. "He's all of a tremble."

"Well he may be," said Jonas, "after the mad fit he has had. Get him up-stairs."

She was by this time assisting him to rise.

"There's my blessed old chick!" cried Mrs. Gamp, in a tone that was at once soothing and encouraging. "There's my darlin' Mr. Chuffey! Now come up to your own room, sir, and lay down on your bed a bit; for you're a shakin' all over, as if your precious jint's was hung upon wires. That's a good creetur! come with Sairey!"

"Is she come home?" inquired the old man.

"She'll be here directly minit," returned Mrs. Gamp. "Come with Sairey, Mr. Chuffey. Come with your own Sairey!"

The good woman had no reference to any female in the world in promising this speedy advent of the person for whom Mr. Chuffey inquired, but merely threw it out as a means of pacifying the old man. It had its effect, for he permitted her to lead him away; and they quitted the room together.

Jonas looked out of the window again. They were still reading the printed paper in the shop opposite, and a third man had joined in the perusal. What could it be, to interest them so?

A dispute or discussion seemed to arise among them, for they all looked up from their reading together, and one of the three, who had been glancing over the shoulder of another, stepped back to explain or illustrate some action by his gestures.

Horror! How like the blow he had struck in the wood!

It beat him from the window as if it had

lighted on himself. As he staggered into a chair, he thought of the change in Mrs. Gamp, exhibited in her new-born tenderness to her charge. Was that because it was found?—because she knew of it?—because she suspected him?

“Mr. Chuffey is a lyin’ down,” said Mrs. Gamp, returning, “and much good may it do him, Mr. Chuzzlewit, which harm it can’t and good it may: be joyful!”

“Sit down,” said Jonas, hoarsely, “and let us get this business done. Where is the other woman?”

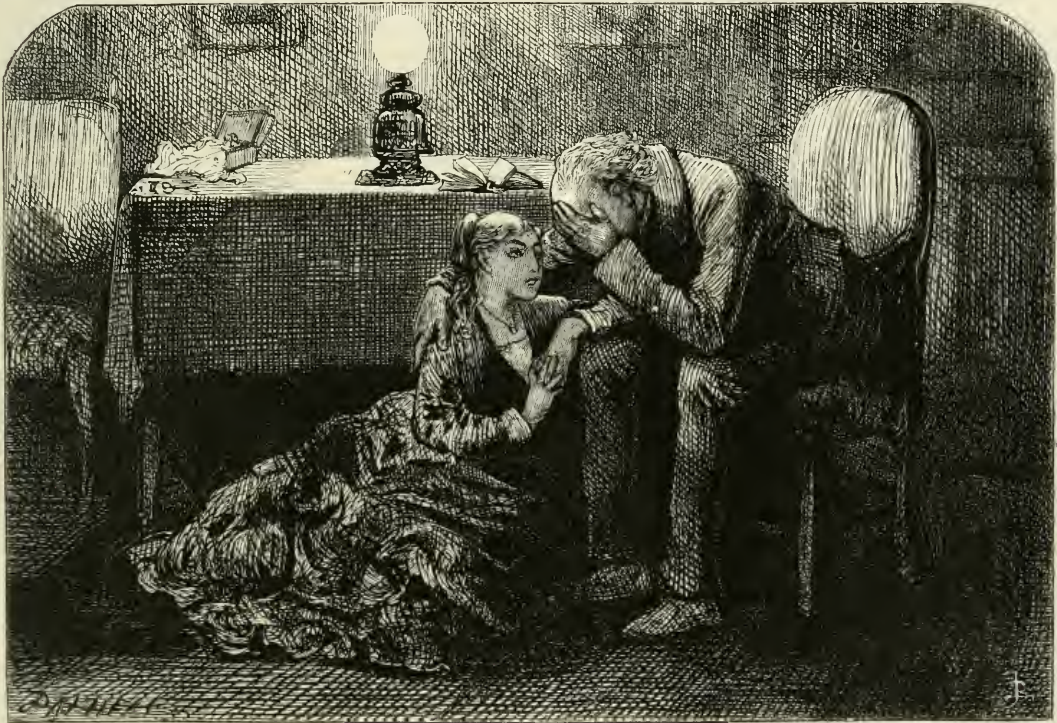
“The other person’s with him now,” she answered.

“That’s right,” said Jonas. “He is not fit to be left to himself. Why, he fastened on me to-night; here, upon my coat; like a savage dog. Old as he is, and feeble as he is usually, I had some trouble to shake him off. You—Hush!—It’s nothing. You told me the other woman’s name. I forget it.”

“I mentioned Betsey Prig,” said Mrs. Gamp.

“She is to be trusted, is she?”

“That she ain’t!” said Mrs. Gamp; “nor have I brought her, Mr. Chuzzlewit. I’ve



BROTHER AND SISTER.

brought another, which engages to give every satisfaction.”

“What is her name?” asked Jonas.

Mrs. Gamp looked at him in an odd way without returning any answer, but appeared to understand the question too.

“What is her name?” repeated Jonas.

“Her name,” said Mrs. Gamp, “is Harris.”

It was extraordinary how much effort it cost Mrs. Gamp to pronounce the name she was commonly so ready with. She made some three or four gasps before she could get it out;

and, when she had uttered it, pressed her hand upon her side, and turned up her eyes, as if she were going to faint away. But, knowing her to labour under a complication of internal disorders, which rendered a few drops of spirits indispensable at certain times to her existence, and which came on very strong when that remedy was not at hand, Jonas merely supposed her to be the victim of one of these attacks.

“Well!” he said, hastily, for he felt how incapable he was of confining his wandering

attention to the subject. "You and she have arranged to take care of him, have you?"

Mrs. Gamp replied in the affirmative, and softly discharged herself of her familiar phrase, "Turn and turn about; one off, one on." But she spoke so tremulously that she felt called upon to add, "which fiddle-strings is weakness to exprede my nerves this night!"

Jonas stopped to listen. Then said, hurriedly:

"We shall not quarrel about terms. Let them be the same as they were before. Keep him close, and keep him quiet. He must be restrained. He has got it in his head to-night that my wife's dead, and has been attacking me as if I had killed her. It's—it's common with mad people to take the worst fancies of those they like best. Isn't it?"

Mrs. Gamp assented with a short groan.

"Keep him close, then, or in one of his fits he'll be doing me a mischief. And don't trust him at any time; for when he seems most rational, he's wildest in his talk. But that you know already. Let me see the other."

"The t'other person, sir?" said Mrs. Gamp.

"Ay! Go you to him and send the other. Quick! I'm busy."

Mrs. Gamp took two or three backward steps towards the door, and stopped there.

"It is your wishes, Mr. Chuzzlewit," she said, in a sort of quavering croak, "to see the t'other person. Is it?"

But the ghastly change in Jonas told her that the other person was already seen. Before she could look round towards the door, she was put aside by old Martin's hand; and Chuffey and John Westlock entered with him.

"Let no one leave the house," said Martin. "This man is my brother's son. Ill-met, ill-trained, ill-begotten. If he moves from the spot on which he stands, or speaks a word above his breath to any person here, open the window, and call for help!"

"What right have you to give such directions in this house?" asked Jonas faintly.

"The right of your wrong-doing. Come in there!"

An irrepressible exclamation burst from the lips of Jonas, as Lewsome entered at the door. It was not a groan, or a shriek, or a word, but was wholly unlike any sound that had ever fallen on the ears of those who heard it, while at the same time it was the most sharp and terrible expression of what was working in his guilty breast, that nature could have invented.

He had done murder for this! He had girdled himself about with perils, agonies of

mind, innumerable fears, for this! He had hidden his secret in the wood; pressed and stamped it down into the bloody ground; and here it started up when least expected, miles upon miles away; known to many; proclaiming itself from the lips of an old man who had renewed his strength and vigour as by a miracle, to give it voice against him.

He leaned his hand on the back of a chair, and looked at them. It was in vain to try to do so, scornfully; or with his usual insolence. He required the chair for his support. But he made a struggle for it.

"I know that fellow," he said, fetching his breath at every word, and pointing his trembling finger towards Lewsome. "He's the greatest liar alive. What's his last tale? Ha, ha! You're rare fellows, too! Why, that uncle of mine is childish; he's even a greater child than his brother, my father, was, in his old age; or than Chuffey is. What the devil do you mean," he added, looking fiercely at John Westlock and Mark Tapley (the latter had entered with Lewsome), "by coming here, and bringing two idiots and a knave with you to take my house by storm? Hallo, there! Open the door! Turn these strangers out!"

"I tell you what," cried Mr. Tapley, coming forward, "if it wasn't for your name, I'd drag you through the streets of my own accord, and single-handed, I would! Ah, I would! Don't try and look bold at me. You can't do it. Now go on, sir," this was to old Martin. "Bring the murderin' wagabond upon his knees! If he wants noise, he shall have enough of it; for as sure as he's a shiverin' from head to foot, I'll raise a uproar at this winder that shall bring half London in. Go on, sir! Let him try me once, and see whether I'm a man of my word or not."

With that, Mark folded his arms, and took his seat upon the window-ledge, with an air of general preparation for anything, which seemed to imply that he was equally ready to jump out himself, or to throw Jonas out, upon receiving the slightest hint that it would be agreeable to the company.

Old Martin turned to Lewsome:

"This is the man," he said, extending his hand towards Jonas. "Is it?"

"You need do no more than look at him to be sure of that, or of the truth of what I have said," was the reply. "He is my witness."

"Oh, brother!" cried old Martin, clasping his hands and lifting up his eyes. "Oh, brother, brother! Were we strangers half our lives that you might breed a wretch like this, and I make

life a desert by withering every flower that grew about me! Is it the natural end of your precepts and mine, that this should be the creature of your rearing, training, teaching, hoarding, striving for: and I the means of bringing him to punishment, when nothing can repair the wasted past!"

He sat down upon a chair as he spoke, and turning away his face, was silent for a few moments. Then with recovered energy he proceeded:

"But the accursed harvest of our mistaken lives shall be trodden down. It is not too late for that. You are confronted with this man, yon monster there; not to be spared, but to be dealt with justly. Hear what he says! Reply, be silent, contradict, repeat, defy, do what you please. My course shall be the same. Go on! And you," he said to Chuffey, "for the love of your old friend, speak out, good fellow!"

"I have been silent for his love!" cried the old man. "He urged me to it. He made me promise it, upon his dying bed. I never would have spoken, but for your finding out so much. I have thought about it ever since: I couldn't help that: and sometimes I have had it all before me in a dream: but in the day-time, not in sleep. Is there such a kind of dream?" said Chuffey, looking anxiously in old Martin's face.

As Martin made him an encouraging reply, he listened attentively to his voice; and smiled.

"Ah, ay!" he cried. "He often spoke to me like that. We were at school together, he and I. I couldn't turn against his son, you know—his only son, Mr. Chuzzlewit!"

"I would to heaven you had been his son!" said Martin.

"You speak so like my dear old master," cried the old man with a childish delight, "that I almost think I hear him. I can hear you quite as well as I used to hear him. It makes me young again. He never spoke unkindly to me, and I always understood him. I could always see him too, though my sight was dim. Well, well! He's dead, he's dead. He was very good to me, my dear old master!"

He shook his head mournfully over the brother's hand. At this moment Mark, who had been glancing out of the window, left the room.

"I couldn't turn against his only son, you know," said Chuffey. "He has nearly driven me to do it sometimes; he very nearly did to-night. Ah!" cried the old man, with a sudden recollection of the cause. "Where is she! She's not come home!"

"Do you mean his wife?" said Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"Yes."

"I have removed her. She is in my care, and will be spared the present knowledge of what is passing here. She has known misery enough, without that addition."

Jonas heard this with a sinking heart. He knew that they were on his heels, and felt that they were resolute to run him to destruction. Inch by inch the ground beneath him was sliding from his feet; faster and faster the encircling ruin contracted and contracted towards himself, its wicked centre, until it should close in and crush him.

And now he heard the voice of his accomplice stating to his face, with every circumstance of time and place and incident; and openly proclaiming, with no reserve, suppression, passion, or concealment; all the truth. The truth, which nothing would keep down; which blood would not smother, and earth would not hide; the truth, whose terrible inspiration seemed to change dotards into strong men; and on whose avenging wings, one whom he had supposed to be at the extremest corner of the earth came swooping down upon him.

He tried to deny it, but his tongue would not move. He conceived some desperate thought of rushing away, and tearing through the streets; but his limbs would as little answer to his will as his stark, stiff, staring face. All this time the voice went slowly on, denouncing him. It was as if every drop of blood in the wood had found a voice to jeer him with.

When it ceased, another voice took up the tale, but strangely; for the old clerk, who had watched, and listened to the whole, and had wrung his hands from time to time, as if he knew its truth and could confirm it, broke in with these words:

"No, no, no! you're wrong; you're wrong—all wrong together! Have patience, for the truth is only known to me!"

"How can that be," said his old master's brother, "after what you have heard? Besides, you said just now, above-stairs, when I told you of the accusation against him, that you knew he was his father's murderer."

"Ay, yes! and so he was!" cried Chuffey, wildly. "But not as you suppose—not as you suppose. Stay! Give me a moment's time. I have it all here—all here! It was foul, foul, cruel, bad; but not as you suppose. Stay, stay!"

He put his hands up to his head, as if it throbbled or pained him. After looking about

him in a wandering and vacant manner for some moments, his eyes rested upon Jonas, when they kindled up with sudden recollection and intelligence.

"Yes!" cried old Chuffey, "yes! That's how it was. It's all upon me now. He—he got up from his bed before he died, to be sure, to say that he forgave him; and he came down with me into this room; and when he saw him—his only son, the son he loved—his speech forsook him: he had no speech for what he knew—and no one understood him except me. But I did—I did!"

Old Martin regarded him in amazement; so did his companions. Mrs. Gamp, who had said nothing yet; but had kept two-thirds of herself behind the door, ready for escape, and one-third in the room, ready for siding with the strongest party; came a little further in and remarked, with a sob, that Mr. Chuffey was "the sweetest old creetur goin'."

"He bought the stuff," said Chuffey, stretching out his arm towards Jonas, while an unwonted fire shone in his eye, and lightened up his face; "he bought the stuff, no doubt, as you have heard, and brought it home. He mixed the stuff—look at him!—with some sweetmeat in a jar, exactly as the medicine for his father's cough was mixed, and put it in a drawer; in that drawer yonder; in the desk; he knows which drawer I mean! He kept it there locked up. But his courage failed him, or his heart was touched—my God! I hope it was his heart! He was his only son!—and he did not put it in the usual place, where my old master would have taken it twenty times a day."

The trembling figure of the old man shook with the strong emotions that possessed him. But with the same light in his eye, and with his arm outstretched, and with his grey hair stirring on his head, he seemed to grow in size, and was like a man inspired. Jonas shrunk from looking at him, and cowered down into the chair by which he had held. It seemed as if this tremendous Truth could make the dumb speak.

"I know it every word now!" cried Chuffey. "Every word! He put it in that drawer, as I have said. He went so often there, and was so secret, that his father took notice of it; and when he was out, had it opened. We were there together, and we found the mixture—Mr. Chuzzlewit and I. He took it into his possession, and made light of it at the time; but in the night he came to my bedside, weeping, and told me that his own son had it in his mind to poison him. 'Oh, Chuff!' he said, 'oh, dear

old Chuff! a voice came into my room to-night, and told me that this crime began with me. It began when I taught him to be too covetous of what I have to leave, and made the expectation of it his great business!' Those were his words; ay, they are his very words! If he was a hard man now and then, it was for his only son. He loved his only son, and he was always good to me!"

Jonas listened with increased attention. Hope was breaking in upon him.

"'He shall not weary for my death, Chuff:' that was what he said next," pursued the old clerk, as he wiped his eyes; "that was what he said next, crying like a little child: 'He shall not weary for my death, Chuff. He shall have it now; he shall marry where he has a fancy, Chuff, although it don't please me; and you and I will go away and live upon a little. I always loved him; perhaps he'll love *me* then. It's a dreadful thing to have my own child thirsting for my death. But I might have known it. I have sown, and I must reap. He shall believe that I am taking this; and when I see that he is sorry, and has all he wants, I'll tell him that I found it out, and I'll forgive him. He'll make a better man of his own son, and be a better man himself, perhaps, Chuff!'"

Poor Chuffey paused to dry his eyes again. Old Martin's face was hidden in his hands. Jonas listened still more keenly, and his breast heaved like a swollen water, but with hope. With growing hope.

"My dear old master made believe next day," said Chuffey, "that he had opened the drawer by mistake with a key from the bunch, which happened to fit it (we had one made and hung upon it); and that he had been surprised to find his fresh supply of cough medicine in such a place, but supposed it had been put there in a hurry when the drawer stood open. We burnt it; but his son believed that he was taking it—he knows he did. Once Mr. Chuzzlewit, to try him, took heart to say it had a strange taste; and he got up directly, and went out."

Jonas gave a short, dry cough; and, changing his position for an easier one, folded his arms without looking at them, though they could now see his face.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit wrote to her father; I mean the father of the poor thing who's his wife;" said Chuffey; "and got him to come up: intending to hasten on the marriage. But his mind, like mine, went a little wrong through grief, and then his heart broke. He sank and

altered from the time when he came to me in the night; and never held up his head again. It was only a few days, but he had never changed so much in twice the years. 'Spare him, Chuff!' he said, before he died. 'They were the only words he could speak. 'Spare him, Chuff!' I promised him I would. I've tried to do it. He's his only son.'

In his recollection of the last scene in his old friend's life, poor Chuffey's voice, which had grown weaker and weaker, quite deserted him. Making a motion with his hand, as if he would have said that Anthony had taken it, and had died with it in his, he retreated to the corner where he usually concealed his sorrows; and was silent.

Jonas could look at his company now, and vauntingly too. "Well!" he said, after a pause. "Are you satisfied? Or have you any more of your plots to broach? Why that fellow, Lewsome, can invent 'em for you by the score. Is this all? Have you nothing else?"

Old Martin looked at him steadily.

"Whether you are what you seemed to be at Pecksniff's, or are something else and a mount-bank, I don't know and I don't care," said Jonas, looking downward with a smile, "but I don't want you here. You were here so often when your brother was alive, and were always so fond of him (your dear dear brother and you would have been cuffing one another before this, eood!) that I'm not surprised at your being attached to the place; but the place is not attached to you, and you can't leave it too soon, though you may leave it too late. And for my wife, old man, send her home straight, or it will be the worse for her. Ha ha! You carry it with a high hand too! But it isn't hanging yet for a man to keep a penn'orth of poison for his own purposes, and have it taken from him by two old crazy jolter-heads who go and act a play about it. Ha, ha! Do you see the door?"

His base triumph, struggling with his cowardice, and shame, and guilt, was so detestable, that they turned away from him, as if he were some obscene and filthy animal, repugnant to the sight. And here that last black crime was busy with him too; working within him to his perdition. But for that, the old clerk's story might have touched him, though never so lightly; but for that, the sudden removal of so great a load might have brought about some wholesome change even in him. With that deed done, however; with that unnecessary wasteful danger haunting him; despair was in his very triumph and relief: wild, ungovernable, raging despair, for the uselessness of the peril into which he

had plunged; despair that hardened him and maddened him, and set his teeth a grinding in a moment of his exultation.

"My good friend!" said Martin, laying his hand on Chuffey's sleeve. "This is no place for you to remain in. Come with me."

"Just his old way!" cried Chuffey, looking up into his face. "I almost believe it's Mr. Chuzzlewit alive again. Yes! Take me with you! Stay though, stay."

"For what?" asked Martin.

"I can't leave her, poor thing!" said Chuffey. "She has been very good to me. I can't leave her, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Thank you kindly. I'll remain here. I hav'n't long to remain; it's no great matter."

As he meekly shook his poor, grey head, and thanked old Martin in these words, Mrs. Gamp, now entirely in the room, was affected to tears.

"The mercy as it is!" she said, "as sech a dear, good, reverend creetur, never got into the clutches of Betsey Prig, which but for me he would have done, undoubted: facts bein' stubborn and not easy drove!"

"You heard me speak to you just now, old man," said Jonas to his uncle. "I'll have no more tampering with my people, man or woman. Do you see the door?"

"Do you see the door?" returned the voice of Mark, coming from that direction. "Look at it!"

He looked, and his gaze was nailed there. Fatal, ill-omened, blighted, threshold, cursed by his father's footsteps in his dying hour, cursed by his young wife's sorrowing tread, cursed by the daily shadow of the old clerk's figure, cursed by the crossing of his murderer's feet—what men were standing in the doorway!

Nadgett foremost.

Hark! It came on roaring like a sea! Hawksers burst into the street, crying it up and down; windows were thrown open that the inhabitants might hear it; people stopped to listen in the road and on the pavement; the bells, the same bells began to ring: tumbling over one another in a dance of boisterous joy at the discovery (that was the sound they had in his distempered thoughts), and making their airy playground rock.

"That is the man," said Nadgett. "By the window!"

Three others came in, laid hands upon him, and secured him. It was so quickly done, that he had not lost sight of the informer's face for an instant when his wrists were manacled together.

"Murder," said Nadgett, looking round on the astonished group. "Let no one interfere."

The sounding street repeated Murder. Barbarous and dreadful Murder; Murder, Murder, Murder. Rolling on from house to house, and echoing from stone to stone, until the voices died away into the distant hum, which seemed to mutter the same word.

They all stood silent: listening, and gazing in each other's faces, as the noise passed on.

Martin was the first to speak. "What terrible history is this?" he demanded.

"Ask *him*," said Nadgett. "You're his friend, sir. He can tell you, if he will. He knows more of it than I do, though I know much."

"How do you know much?"

"I have not been watching him so long for nothing," returned Nadgett. "I never watched a man so close as I have watched him."

Another of the phantom forms of this terrific Truth! Another of the many shapes in which it started up about him, out of vacancy. This man, of all men in the world, a spy upon him; this man changing his identity: casting off his shrinking, purblind, unobservant character, and springing up into a watchful enemy! The dead man might have come out of his grave, and not confounded and appalled him so.

The game was up. The race was at an end; the rope was woven for his neck. If by a miracle he could escape from this strait, he had but to turn his face another way, no matter where, and there would rise some new avenger front to front with him; some infant in an hour grown old, or old man in an hour grown young, or blind man with his sight restored, or deaf man with his hearing given him. There was no chance. He sank down in a heap against the wall, and never hoped again from that moment.

"I am not his friend, although I have the dishonour to be his relative," said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "You may speak to me. Where have you watched, and what have you seen?"

"I have watched in many places," returned Nadgett, "night and day. I have watched him lately, almost without rest or relief:" his anxious face and bloodshot eyes confirmed it. "I little thought to what my watching was to lead. As little as he did when he slipped out in the night, dressed in those clothes which he afterwards sunk in a bundle at London Bridge!"

Jonas moved upon the ground like a man in bodily torture. He uttered a suppressed groan, as if he had been wounded by some cruel weapon; and plucked at the iron band upon his wrists, as though (his hands being free) he would have torn himself.

"Steady, kinsman!" said the chief officer of the party. "Don't be violent."

"Whom do you call kinsman?" asked old Martin sternly.

"You," said the man, "among others."

Martin turned his scrutinising gaze upon him. He was sitting lazily across a chair with his arms resting on the back; eating nuts, and throwing the shells out of window as he cracked them, which he still continued to do, while speaking.

"Ay," he said with a sulky nod. "You may deny your nephews till you die; but Chevy Slyme is Chevy Slyme still, all the world over. Perhaps even you may feel it some disgrace to your own blood to be employed in this way. I'm to be bought off."

"At every turn!" cried Martin. "Self, self, self. Every one among them for himself!"

"You had better save one or two among them the trouble then, and be for them as well as *yourself*," replied his nephew. "Look here at me! Can you see the man of your family, who has more talent in his little finger than all the rest in their united brains, dressed as a police officer without being ashamed? I took up with this trade on purpose to shame you. I didn't think I should have to make a capture in the family, though."

"If your debauchery, and that of your chosen friends, has really brought you to this level," returned the old man, "keep it. You are living honestly, I hope, and that's something."

"Don't be hard upon my chosen friends," returned Slyme, "for they were sometimes your chosen friends too. Don't say you never employed my friend Tigg, for I know better. We quarrelled upon it."

"I hired the fellow," retorted Mr. Chuzzlewit, "and I paid him."

"It's well you paid him," said his nephew, "for it would be too late to do so now. He has given his receipt in full: or had it forced from him rather."

The old man looked at him as if he were curious to know what he meant, but scorned to prolong their conversation.

"I have always expected that he and I would be brought together again in the course of business," said Slyme, taking a fresh handful of nuts from his pocket, "but I thought he would be wanted for some swindling job: it never entered my head that I should hold a warrant for the apprehension of his murderer."

"His murderer!" cried Mr. Chuzzlewit, looking from one to another.

"His or Mr. Montague's," said Nadgett. "They

are the same, I am told. I accuse him yonder of the murder of Mr. Montague, who was found last night, killed, in a wood. You will ask me why I accuse him, as you have already asked me how I know so much. I'll tell you. It can't remain a secret long."

The ruling passion of the man expressed itself even then, in the tone of regret in which he deplored the approaching publicity of what he knew.

"I told you I had watched him," he proceeded. "I was instructed to do so by Mr. Montague, in whose employment I had been for some time. We had our suspicions of him; and you know what they pointed at, for you have been discussing it since we have been waiting here, outside the room. If you care to hear, now it's all over, in what our suspicions began, I'll tell you plainly: in a quarrel (it first came to our ears through a hint of his own) between him and another office in which his father's life was insured, and which had so much doubt and distrust upon the subject, that he compounded with them, and took half the money; and was glad to do it. Bit by bit, I ferreted out more circumstances against him, and not a few. It required a little patience; but it's my calling. I found the nurse—here she is to confirm me; I found the doctor, I found the undertaker, I found the undertaker's man. I found out how the old gentleman there, Mr. Chuffey, had behaved at the funeral; and I found out what this man," touching Lewsome on the arm, "had talked about in his fever. I found out how he conducted himself before his father's death, and how since, and how at the time; and writing it all down, and putting it carefully together, made case enough for Mr. Montague to tax him with the crime, which (as he himself believed until to-night) he had committed. I was by when this was done. You see him now. He is only worse than he was then."

Oh, miserable, miserable fool! oh, insupportable, excruciating torture! To find alive and active—a party to it all—the brain and right-hand of the secret he had thought to crush! In whom, though he had walled the murdered man up, by enchantment in a rock, the story would have lived and walked abroad! He tried to stop his ears with his fettered arms, that he might shut out the rest.

As he crouched upon the floor, they drew away from him as if a pestilence were in his breath. They fell off, one by one, from that part of the room, leaving him alone upon the ground. Even those who had him in their keeping shunned him, and (with the exception

of Slyme, who was still occupied with his nuts) kept apart.

"From that garret-window opposite," said Nadgett, pointing across the narrow street, "I have watched this house and him for days and nights. From that garret-window opposite I saw him return home, alone, from a journey on which he had set out with Mr. Montague. That was my token that Mr. Montague's end was gained; and I might rest easy on my watch, though I was not to leave it until he dismissed me. But, standing at the door opposite, after dark that same night, I saw a countryman steal out of this house, by a side-door in the court, who had never entered it. I knew his walk, and that it was himself, disguised. I followed him immediately. I lost him on the western road, still travelling westward."

Jonas looked up at him for an instant and muttered an oath.

"I could not comprehend what this meant," said Nadgett; "but, having seen so much, I resolved to see it out, and through. And I did. Learning, on inquiry at his house from his wife, that he was supposed to be sleeping in the room from which I had seen him go out, and that he had given strict orders not to be disturbed, I knew that he was coming back; and for his coming back I watched. I kept my watch in the street—in doorways, and such places—all that night; at the same window, all next day; and when night came on again, in the street once more. For I knew he would come back, as he had gone out, when this part of the town was empty. He did. Early in the morning, the same countryman came creeping, creeping, creeping home."

"Look sharp!" interposed Slyme, who had now finished his nuts. "This is quite irregular, Mr. Nadgett."

"I kept at the window all day," said Nadgett, without heeding him. "I think I never closed my eyes. At night, I saw him come out with a bundle. I followed him again. He went down the steps at London Bridge, and sunk it in the river. I now began to entertain some serious fears, and made a communication to the Police, which caused that bundle to be—"

"To be fished up," interrupted Slyme. "Be alive, Mr. Nadgett."

"It contained the dress I had seen him wear," said Nadgett; "stained with clay, and spotted with blood. Information of the murder was received in town last night. The wearer of that dress is already known to have been seen near the place; to have been lurking in that neighbourhood; and to have alighted from a coach

coming from that part of the country, at a time exactly tallying with the very minute when I saw him returning home. The warrant has been out, and these officers have been with me some hours. We chose our time; and seeing you come in, and seeing this person at the window—

"Beckoned to him," said Mark, taking up the thread of the narrative, on hearing this allusion to himself, "to open the door; which he did with a deal of pleasure."

"That's all at present," said Nadgett, putting up his great pocket-book, which from mere habit he had produced when he began his revelation, and had kept in his hand all the time; "but there is plenty more to come. You asked me for the facts so far; I have related them, and need not detain these gentlemen any longer. Are you ready, Mr. Slyme?"

"And something more," replied that worthy, rising. "If you walk round to the office, we shall be there as soon as you. Tom! Get a coach!"

The officer to whom he spoke departed for that purpose. Old Martin lingered for a few moments, as if he would have addressed some words to Jonas; but looking round, and seeing him still seated on the floor, rocking himself in a savage manner to and fro, took Chuffey's arm, and slowly followed Nadgett out. John Westlock and Mark Tapley accompanied them. Mrs. Gamp had tottered out first, for the better display of her feelings, in a kind of walking swoon; for Mrs. Gamp performed swoons of different sorts, upon a moderate notice, as Mr. Mould did Funerals.

"Ha!" muttered Slyme, looking after them. "Upon my soul! As insensible of being disgraced by having such a nephew as myself, in such a situation, as he was of my being an honour and a credit to the family! That's the return I get for having humbled my spirit—such a spirit as mine—to earn a livelihood, is it?"

He got up from his chair, and kicked it away indignantly.

"And such a livelihood too! When there are hundreds of men, not fit to hold a candle to me, rolling in carriages and living on their fortunes. Upon my soul it's a nice world!"

His eyes encountered Jonas, who looked earnestly towards him, and moved his lips as if he were whispering.

"Eh?" said Slyme.

Jonas glanced at the attendant whose back was towards him, and made a clumsy motion with his bound hands towards the door.

"Humph!" said Slyme, thoughtfully. "I couldn't hope to disgrace him into anything when you have shot so far ahead of me though. I forgot that."

Jonas repeated the same look and gesture.

"Jack!" said Slyme.

"Hallo!" returned his man.

"Go down to the door, ready for the coach. Call out when it comes. I'd rather have you there. Now then," he added, turning hastily to Jonas, when the man was gone. "What's the matter?"

Jonas essayed to rise.

"Stop a bit," said Slyme. "It's not so easy when your wrists are tight together. Now then! Up! What is it?"

"Put your hand in my pocket. Here! The breast-pocket, on the left!" said Jonas.

He did so; and drew out a purse.

"There's a hundred pound in it," said Jonas, whose words were almost unintelligible; as his face, in its pallor and agony, was scarcely human.

Slyme looked at him; gave it into his hands; and shook his head.

"I can't. I daren't. I couldn't if I dared. Those fellows below—"

"Escape's impossible," said Jonas. "I know it. One hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room!"

"What to do?" he asked.

The face of his prisoner as he advanced to whisper in his ear, made him recoil involuntarily. But he stopped and listened to him. The words were few, but his own face changed as he heard them.

"I have it about me," said Jonas, putting his hands to his throat, as though whatever he referred to, were hidden in his neckerchief. "How should you know of it? How could you know? A hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room! The time's passing. Speak!"

"It would be more—more creditable to the family," observed Slyme, with trembling lips. "I wish you hadn't told me half so much. Less would have served your purpose. You might have kept it to yourself."

"A hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room! Speak!" cried Jonas, desperately.

He took the purse. Jonas, with a wild unsteady step, retreated to the door in the glass partition.

"Stop!" cried Slyme, catching at his skirts. "I don't know about this. Yet it must end so at last. Are you guilty?"

"Yes!" said Jonas.

"Are the proofs as they were told just now?"

"Yes!" said Jonas.

"Will you—will you engage to say a—*a* Prayer, or something of that sort?" faltered Slyme.

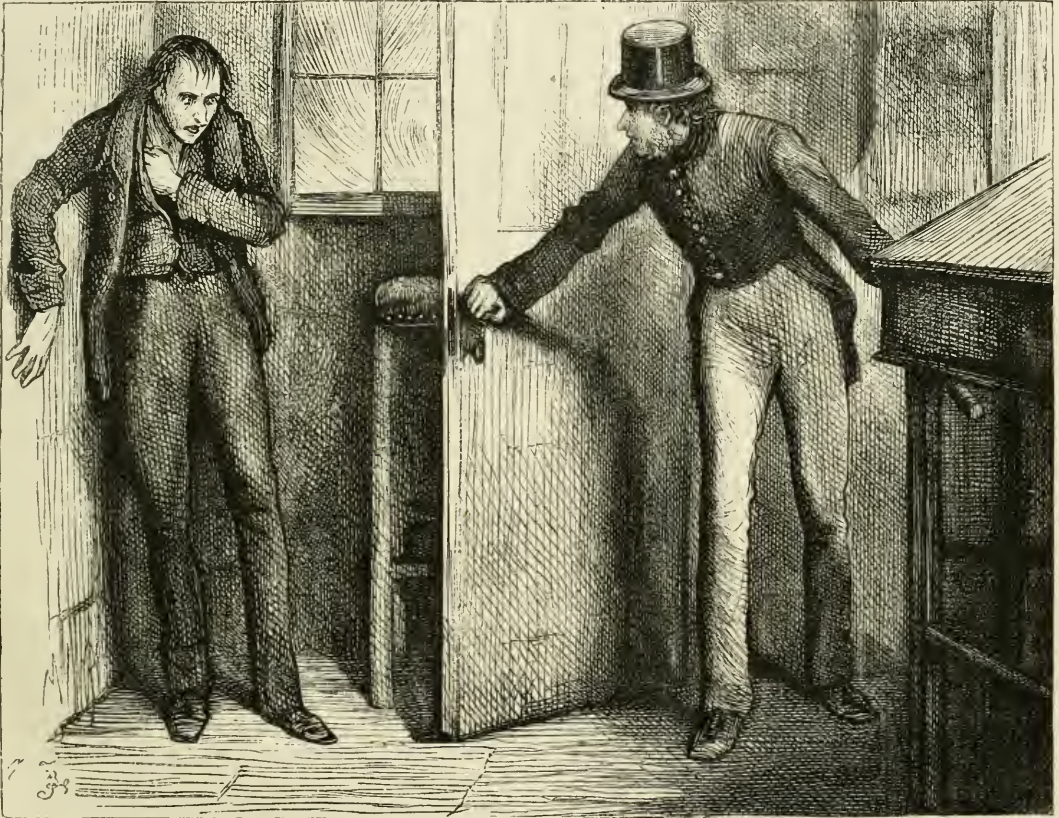
Jonas broke from him without replying, and closed the door between them.

Slyme listened at the keyhole. After that, he crept away on tiptoe, as far off as he could; and looked awfully towards the place. He was

roused by the arrival of the coach, and their letting down the steps.

"He's getting a few things together," he said, leaning out of window, and speaking to the two men below, who stood in the full light of a street lamp. "Keep your eye upon the back, one of you, for form's sake."

One of the men withdrew into the court. The other, seating himself on the steps of the coach, remained in conversation with Slyme at



"HE STARTED BACK AS HIS EYES MET THOSE OF JONAS, STANDING IN AN ANGLE OF THE WALL, AND STARING AT HIM. HIS NECKERCHIEF WAS OFF; HIS FACE WAS ASHY PALE."

the window; who perhaps had risen to be his superior, in virtue of his old propensity (one so much lauded by the murdered man) of being always round the corner. A useful habit in his present calling.

"Where is he?" asked the man.

Slyme looked into the room for an instant, and gave his head a jerk as much as to say, "Close at hand. I see him."

"He's booked," observed the man.

"Through," said Slyme.

They looked at each other, and up and down

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the street. The man on the coach-steps took his hat off, and put it on again, and whistled a little.

"I say! he's taking his time!" he remonstrated.

"I allowed him five minutes," said Slyme. "Time's more than up, though. I'll bring him down."

He withdrew from the window accordingly, and walked on tiptoe to the door in the partition. He listened. There was not a sound within. He set the candles near it, that they might shine through the glass.

It was not easy, he found, to make up his mind to the opening of the door. But he flung it wide open suddenly, and with a noise; then retreated. After peeping in and listening again, he entered.

He started back as his eyes met those of Jonas, standing in an angle of the wall, and staring at him. His neckerchief was off; his face was ashy pale.

"You're too soon," said Jonas, with an abject whimper. "I've not had time. I have not been able to do it. I—five minutes more—two minutes more!—Only one!"

Slyme gave him no reply, but thrusting the purse upon him and forcing it back into his pocket, called up his men.

He whined, and cried, and cursed, and entreated them, and struggled, and submitted, in the same breath, and had no power to stand. But they got him away and into the coach, where they put him on a seat, but he soon fell moaning down among the straw at the bottom, and lay there.

The two men were with him; Slyme being on the box with the driver; and they let him lie. Happening to pass a fruiterer's on their way, the door of which was open, though the shop was by this time shut, one of them remarked how faint the peaches smelt.

The other assented at the moment, but presently stooped down in quick alarm, and looked at the prisoner.

"Stop the coach! He has poisoned himself! The smell comes from this bottle in his hand!"

The hand had shut upon it tight. With that rigidity of grasp with which no living man, in the full strength and energy of life, can clutch a prize he has won.

They dragged him out, into the dark street; but jury, judge, and hargman could have done no more, and could do nothing now. Dead, dead, dead.

CHAPTER LII.

IN WHICH THE TABLES ARE TURNED, COMPLETELY UPSIDE DOWN.

OLD MARTIN'S cherished projects, so long hidden in his own breast, so frequently in danger of abrupt disclosure through the bursting forth of the indignation he had hoarded up, during his residence with Mr. Pecksniff, were retarded, but not beyond a few hours, by the occurrences just now related. Stunned,

as he had been at first by the intelligence conveyed to him through Tom Pinch and John Westlock, of the supposed manner of his brother's death; overwhelmed as he was by the subsequent narratives of Chuffey and Nadgett, and the forging of that chain of circumstances ending in the death of Jonas, of which catastrophe he was immediately informed; scattered as his purposes and hopes were for the moment, by the crowding in of all these incidents between him and his end; still their very intensity and the tumult of their assemblage nerved him to the rapid and unyielding execution of his scheme. In every single circumstance, whether it were cruel, cowardly, or false, he saw the flowering of the same pregnant seed. Self; grasping, eager, narrow-ranging, over-reaching self; with its long train of suspicions, lusts, deceptions, and all their growing consequences; was the root of the vile tree. Mr. Pecksniff had so presented his character before the old man's eyes, that he—the good, the tolerant, enduring Pecksniff—had become the incarnation of all selfishness and treachery; and the more odious the shapes in which those vices ranged themselves before him now, the sterner consolation he had in his design of setting Mr. Pecksniff right, and Mr. Pecksniff's victims too.

To this work he brought, not only the energy and determination natural to his character (which, as the reader may have observed in the beginning of his or her acquaintance with this gentleman, was remarkable for the strong development of those qualities), but all the forced and unnaturally nurtured energy consequent upon their long suppression. And these two tides of resolution setting into one and sweeping on, became so strong and vigorous, that, to prevent themselves from being carried away before it, Heaven knows where, was as much as John Westlock and Mark Tapley together (though they were tolerably energetic too) could manage to effect.

He had sent for John Westlock immediately on his arrival; and John, under the conduct of Tom Pinch, had waited on him. Having a lively recollection of Mr. Tapley, he had caused that gentleman's attendance to be secured, through John's means, without delay; and thus, as we have seen, they had all repaired, together, to the city. But his grandson he had refused to see until to-morrow, when Mr. Tapley was instructed to summon him to the Temple at ten o'clock in the forenoon. Tom he would not allow to be employed in anything, lest he should be wrongfully suspected; but he was a party to all their proceedings, and was with them until late at

night—until after they knew of the death of Jonas; when he went home to tell all these wonders to little Ruth, and to prepare her for accompanying him to the Temple in the morning, agreeably to Mr. Chuzzlewit's particular injunction.

It was characteristic of old Martin, and his looking on to something which he had distinctly before him, that he communicated to them nothing of his intentions, beyond such hints of reprisal on Mr. Pecksniff as they gathered from the game he had played in that gentleman's house, and the brightening of his eyes whenever his name was mentioned. Even to John Westlock, in whom he was evidently disposed to place great confidence (which may indeed be said of every one of them), he gave no explanation whatever. He merely requested him to return in the morning; and with this for their utmost satisfaction, they left him, when the night was far advanced, alone.

The events of such a day might have worn out the body and spirit of a much younger man than he, but he sat in deep and painful meditation until the morning was bright. Nor did he even then seek any prolonged repose, but merely slumbered in his chair, until seven o'clock, when Mr. Tapley had appointed to come to him by his desire: and came—as fresh and clean and cheerful as the morning itself.

"You are punctual," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, opening the door to him in reply to his light knock, which had roused him instantly.

"My wishes, sir," replied Mr. Tapley, whose mind would appear from the context to have been running on the matrimonial service, "is to love, honour, and obey. The clock's a-striking now, sir."

"Come in!"

"Thank'ee, sir," rejoined Mr. Tapley, "what could I do for you first, sir?"

"You gave my message to Martin?" said the old man, bending his eyes upon him.

"I did, sir," returned Mark; "and you never see a gentleman more surprised in all your born days than he was."

"What more did you tell him?" Mr. Chuzzlewit inquired.

"Why, sir," said Mr. Tapley, smiling, "I should have liked to tell him a deal more, but not being able, sir, I didn't tell it him."

"You told him all you knew."

"But it was precious little, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley. "There was very little respectin' you that I was able to tell him, sir. I only mentioned my opinion that Mr. Pecksniff would find himself deceived, sir, and that you would find your-

self deceived, and that he would find himself deceived, sir."

"In what?" asked Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"Meaning him, sir?"

"Meaning both him and me."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Tapley. "In your old opinions of each other. As to him, sir, and his opinions, I know he's a altered man. I know it. I know'd it long afore he spoke to you t'other day, and I must say it. Nobody don't know half as much of him as I do. Nobody can't. There was always a deal of good in him, but a little of it got crusted over somehow. I can't say who rolled the paste of that 'ere crust myself, but——"

"Go on," said Martin. "Why do you stop?"

"But it—well! I beg your pardon, but I think it may have been you, sir. Unintentional I think it may have been you. I don't believe that neither of you gave the other quite a fair chance. There! Now I've got rid on it;" said Mr. Tapley, in a fit of desperation: "I can't go a carryin' it about in my own mind, bustin' myself with it; yesterday was quite long enough. It's out now. I can't help it. I'm sorry for it. Don't wisit it on him, sir, that's all."

It was clear that Mark expected to be ordered out immediately, and was quite prepared to go.

"So you think," said Martin, "that his old faults are, in some degree, of my creation, do you?"

"Well, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley, "I'm verry sorry, but I can't unsay it. It's hardly fair for you, sir, to make a ignorant man conwict himself in this way, but I do think so. I am as respectful disposed to you, sir, as a man can be; but I *do* think so."

The light of a faint smile seemed to break through the dull steadiness of Martin's face, as he looked attentively at him, without replying.

"Yet you are an ignorant man, you say," he observed, after a long pause.

"Verry much so," Mr. Tapley replied.

"And I a learned, well-instructed man, you think?"

"Likewise verry much so," Mr. Tapley answered.

The old man, with his chin resting on his hand, paced the room twice or thrice before he added:

"You have left him this morning?"

"Come straight from him now, sir."

"For what: does he suppose?"

"He don't know wot to suppose, sir, no more than myself. I told him jest wot passed yesterday, sir, and that you had said to me, 'Can you be here by seven in the morning?' and

that you had said to him, through me, 'Can you be here by ten in the morning?' and that I had said 'Yes' to both. That's all, sir."

His frankness was so genuine that it plainly *was* all:

"Perhaps," said Martin, "he may think you are going to desert him, and to serve me?"

"I have served him in that sort of way, sir," replied Mark, without the loss of any atom of his self-possession; "and we have been that sort of companions in misfortune, that my opinion is, he don't believe a word on it. No more than you do, sir."

"Will you help me to dress? and get me some breakfast from the hotel?" asked Martin.

"With pleasure, sir," said Mark.

"And by-and-by," pursued Martin, "remaining in the room, as I wish you to do, will you attend to the door yonder—give admission to visitors, I mean, when they knock?"

"Certainly, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

"You will not find it necessary to express surprise at their appearance," Martin suggested.

"Oh dear no, sir!" said Mr. Tapley, "not at all."

Although he pledged himself to this with perfect confidence, he was in a state of unbounded astonishment even now. Martin appeared to have observed it, and to have some sense of the ludicrous bearing of Mr. Tapley under these perplexing circumstances; for, in spite of the composure of his voice and the gravity of his face, the same indistinct light flickered on the latter several times. Mark bestirred himself, however, to execute the offices with which he was entrusted; and soon lost all tendency to any outward expression of his surprise, in the occupation of being brisk and busy.

But when he had put Mr. Chuzzlewit's clothes in good order for dressing, and when that gentleman was dressed and sitting at his breakfast, Mr. Tapley's feelings of wonder began to return upon him with great violence; and, standing beside the old man, with a napkin under his arm (it was as natural and easy a joke to Mark to be a butler in the Temple, as it had been to volunteer as cook on board the *Screw*), he found it difficult to resist the temptation of casting sidelong glances at him very often. Nay, he found it impossible; and accordingly yielded to this impulse so often, that Martin caught him in the fact some fifty times. The extraordinary things Mr. Tapley did with his own face when any of these detections occurred; the sudden occasions he had to rub his eyes, or his nose, or his chin; the look of wisdom with which he immediately plunged into the deepest thought, or became intensely interested in the

habits and customs of the flies upon the ceiling, or the sparrows out of doors; or the overwhelming politeness with which he endeavoured to hide his confusion by handing the muffin; may not unreasonably be assumed to have exercised the utmost power of feature that even Martin Chuzzlewit the elder possessed.

But he sat perfectly quiet, and took his breakfast at his leisure, or made a show of doing so, for he scarcely ate or drank, and frequently lapsed into long intervals of musing. When he had finished, Mark sat down to his breakfast at the same table; and Mr. Chuzzlewit, quite silent still, walked up and down the room.

Mark cleared away in due course, and set a chair out for him, in which, as the time drew on towards ten o'clock, he took his seat, leaning his hands upon his stick, and clenching them upon the handle, and resting his chin on them again. All his impatience and abstraction of manner had vanished now; and as he sat there, looking, with his keen eyes, steadily towards the door, Mark could not help thinking what a firm, square, powerful face it was; or exulting in the thought that Mr. Pecksniff, after playing a pretty long game of bowls with its owner, seemed to be at last in a very fair way of coming in for a rubber or two.

Mark's uncertainty in respect of what was going to be done or said, and by whom to whom, would have excited him in itself. But knowing for a certainty, besides, that young Martin was coming, and in a very few minutes must arrive, he found it by no means easy to remain quiet and silent. But, excepting that he occasionally coughed in a hollow and unnatural manner to relieve himself, he behaved with great decorum through the longest ten minutes he had ever known.

A knock at the door. Mr. Westlock. Mr. Tapley, in admitting him, raised his eyebrows to the highest possible pitch, implying thereby that he considered himself in an unsatisfactory position. Mr. Chuzzlewit received him very courteously.

Mark waited at the door for Tom Pinch and his sister, who were coming up the stairs. The old man went to meet them; took her hands in his; and kissed her on the cheek. As this looked promising, Mr. Tapley smiled benignantly.

Mr. Chuzzlewit had resumed his chair, before young Martin, who was close behind them, entered. The old man, scarcely looking at him, pointed to a distant seat. This was less encouraging; and Mr. Tapley's spirits fell again.

He was quickly summoned to the door by another knock. He did not start, or cry, or

tumble down, at sight of Miss Graham and Mrs. Lupin, but he drew a very long breath, and came back perfectly resigned, looking on them and on the rest with an expression which seemed to say, that nothing could surprise him any more; and that he was rather glad to have done with that sensation for ever.

The old man received Mary no less tenderly than he had received Tom Pinch's sister. A look of friendly recognition passed between himself and Mrs. Lupin, which implied the existence of a perfect understanding between them. It engendered no astonishment in Mr. Tapley; for, as he afterwards observed, he had retired from the business, and sold off the stock.

Not the least curious feature in this assemblage was, that everybody present was so much surprised and embarrassed by the sight of everybody else, that nobody ventured to speak. Mr. Chuzzlewit alone broke silence.

"Set the door open, Mark!" he said; "and come here."

Mark obeyed.

The last appointed footstep sounded now upon the stairs. They all knew it. It was Mr. Pecksniff's; and Mr. Pecksniff was in a hurry too, for he came bounding up with such uncommon expedition that he stumbled twice or thrice.

"Where is my venerable friend?" he cried, upon the upper landing; and then with open arms came darting in.

Old Martin merely looked at him; but Mr. Pecksniff started back as if he had received the charge of an electric battery.

"My venerable friend is well?" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"Quite well."

It seemed to reassure the anxious inquirer. He clasped his hands, and, looking upwards with a pious joy, silently expressed his gratitude. He then looked round on the assembled group, and shook his head reproachfully. For such a man severely, quite severely.

"Oh, vermin!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Oh, blood-suckers! Is it not enough that you have embittered the existence of an individual, wholly unparalleled in the biographical records of amiable persons; but must you now, even now, when he has made his election, and reposed his trust in a Numble, but at least sincere and disinterested relative; must you now, vermin and swarmers (I regret to make use of these strong expressions, my dear sir, but there are times when honest indignation will not be controlled), must you now, vermin and swarmers (for I WILL repeat it), taking advantage of his unprotected

state, assemble round him from all quarters, as wolves and vultures, and other animals of the feathered tribe assemble round—I will not say round carrion or a carcass, for Mr. Chuzzlewit is quite the contrary—but round their prey; their prey; to rifle and despoil; gorging their voracious maws, and staining their offensive beaks, with every description of carnivorous enjoyment!"

As he stopped to fetch his breath, he waved them off, in a solemn manner, with his hand.

"Horde of unnatural plunderers and robbers!" he continued; "leave him! leave him, I say! Begone! Abscond! You had better be off! Wander over the face of the earth, young sirs, like vagabonds as you are, and do not presume to remain in a spot which is hallowed by the grey hairs of the patriarchal gentleman to whose tottering limbs I have the honour to act as an unworthy, but I hope an unassuming, prop and staff. And you, my tender sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, addressing himself in a tone of gentle remonstrance to the old man, "how could you ever leave me, though even for this short period! You have absented yourself, I do not doubt, upon some act of kindness to me; bless you for it: but you must not do it; you must not be so venturesome. I should really be angry with you if I could, my friend!"

He advanced with outstretched arms to take the old man's hand. But he had not seen how the hand clasped and clutched the stick within its grasp. As he came smiling on, and got within his reach, old Martin, with his burning indignation crowded into one vehement burst, and flashing out of every line and wrinkle of his face, rose up, and struck him down upon the ground.

With such a well-directed nervous blow, that down he went, as heavily and true as if the charge of a Life-Guardsman had tumbled him out of a saddle. And whether he was stunned by the shock, or only confused by the wonder and novelty of this warm reception, he did not offer to get up again; but lay there, looking about him, with a disconcerted meekness in his face so enormously ridiculous, that neither Mark Tapley nor John Westlock could repress a smile, though both were actively interposing to prevent a repetition of the blow; which the old man's gleaming eyes and vigorous attitude seemed to render one of the most probable events in the world.

"Drag him away! Take him out of my reach!" said Martin. "Or I can't help it. The strong restraint I have put upon my hands

has been enough to palsy them. I am not master of myself, while he is within their range. Drag him away!"

Seeing that he still did not rise, Mr. Tapley, without any compromise about it, actually did drag him away, and stick him up on the floor, with his back against the opposite wall.

"Hear me, rascal!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "I have summoned you here to witness your own work. I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know it will be gall and wormwood to you! I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know the sight of everybody here must be a dagger in your mean false heart! What! do you know me as I am, at last!"

Mr. Pecksniff had cause to stare at him, for the triumph in his face and speech and figure was a sight to stare at.

"Look there!" said the old man, pointing at him, and appealing to the rest. "Look there! And then—Come hither, my dear Martin—look here! here! here!" At every earnest repetition of the word he pressed his grandson closer to his breast.

"The passion I felt, Martin, when I dared not do this," he said, "was in the blow I struck just now. Why did we ever part! How could we ever part! How could you ever fly from me to him!"

Martin was about to answer, but he stopped him, and went on.

"The fault was mine no less than yours. Mark has told me so to-day, and I have known it long; though not so long as I might have done. Mary, my love, come here."

As she trembled and was very pale, he sat her in his own chair, and stood beside it with her hand in his; and Martin standing by him.

"The curse of our house," said the old man, looking kindly down upon her, "has been the love of self; has ever been the love of self. How often have I said so, when I never knew that I had wrought it upon others!"

He drew one hand through Martin's arm, and standing so, between them, proceeded thus:

"You all know how I bred this orphan up, to tend me. None of you can know by what degrees I have come to regard her as a daughter; for she has won upon me, by her self-forgetfulness, her tenderness, her patience, all the goodness of her nature, when Heaven is her witness that I took but little pains to draw it forth. It blossomed without cultivation, and it ripened without heat. I cannot find it in my heart to say that I am sorry for it now, or yonder fellow might be holding up his head."

Mr. Pecksniff put his hand into his waistcoat, and slightly shook that part of him to which allusion had been made: as if to signify that it was still uppermost.

"There is a kind of selfishness," said Martin: "I have learned it in my own experience of my own breast: which is constantly upon the watch for selfishness in others; and holding others at a distance by suspicions and distrusts, wonders why they don't approach, and don't confide, and calls that selfishness in them. Thus I once doubted those about me—not without reason in the beginning—and thus I once doubted you, Martin."

"Not without reason," Martin answered; "either."

"Listen, hypocrite! Listen, smooth-tongued, servile, crawling knave!" said Martin. "Listen, you shallow dog. What! When I was seeking him, you had already spread your nets; you were already fishing for him, were ye? When I lay ill in this good woman's house, and your meek spirit pleaded for my grandson, you had already caught him, had ye? Counting on the restoration of the love you knew I bore him, you designed him for one of your two daughters, did ye? Or failing that, you traded in him as a speculation which at any rate should blind me with the lustre of your charity, and found a claim upon me! Why, even then I knew you, and I told you so. Did I tell you that I knew you, even then?"

"I am not angry, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, softly. "I can bear a great deal from you. I will never contradict you, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"Observe!" said Martin, looking round. "I put myself in that man's hands on terms as mean and base, and as degrading to himself as I could render them in words. I stated them at length to him, before his own children, syllable by syllable, as coarsely as I could, and with as much offence, and with as plain an exposition of my contempt, as words—not looks and manner merely—could convey. If I had only called the angry blood into his face, I would have wavered in my purpose. If I had only stung him into being a man for a minute I would have abandoned it. If he had offered me one word of remonstrance, in favour of the grandson whom he supposed I had disinherited; if he had pleaded with me, though never so faintly, against my appeal to him to abandon him to misery and cast him from his house; I think I could have borne with him for ever afterwards. But not a word, not a word. Pandering to the worst of human passions was the office of his nature; and faithfully he did his work!"

"I am not angry," observed Mr. Pecksniff. "I am hurt, Mr. Chuzzlewit: wounded in my feelings: but I am not angry, my good sir."

Mr. Chuzzlewit resumed.

"Once resolved to try him, I was resolute to pursue the trial to the end; but while I was bent on fathoming the depth of his duplicity, I made a sacred compact with myself that I would give him credit on the other side for any latent spark of goodness, honour, forbearance—any virtue—that might glimmer in him. From first to last, there has been no such thing. Not once. He cannot say I have not given him opportunity. He cannot say I have ever led him on. He cannot say I have not left him freely to himself in all things; or that I have not been a passive instrument in his hands, which he might have used for good as easily as evil. Or if he can, he Lies! And that's his nature too."

"Mr. Chuzzlewit," interrupted Pecksniff, shedding tears. "I am not angry, sir. I cannot be angry with you. But did you never, my dear sir, express a desire that the unnatural young man who by his wicked arts has estranged your good opinion from me, for the time being: only for the time being: that your grandson, Mr. Chuzzlewit, should be dismissed my house? Recollect yourself, my Christian friend."

"I have said so, have I not?" retorted the old man, sternly. "I could not tell how far your specious hypocrisy had deceived him, knave; and knew no better way of opening his eyes than by presenting you before him in your own servile character. Yes. I did express that desire. And you leaped to meet it; and you met it; and turning in an instant on the hand you had licked and beslavered, as only such hounds can, you strengthened, and confirmed, and justified me in my scheme."

Mr. Pecksniff made a bow; a submissive, not to say, a grovelling and an abject bow. If he had been complimented on his practice of the loftiest virtues, he never could have bowed as he bowed then.

"The wretched man who has been murdered," Mr. Chuzzlewit went on to say; "then passing by the name of—"

"Tigg," suggested Mark.

"Of Tigg; brought begging messages to me, on behalf of a friend of his, and an unworthy relative of mine; and finding him a man well enough suited to my purpose, I employed him to glean some news of you, Martin, for me. It was from him I learned that you had taken up your abode with yonder fellow. It was he, who meeting you here, in town, one evening—you remember where?"

"At the pawnbroker's shop," said Martin.

"Yes; watched you to your lodging, and enabled me to send you a Bank note."

"I little thought," said Martin, greatly moved, "that it had come from you. I little thought that you were interested in my fate. If I had—"

"If you had," returned the old man, sorrowfully, "you would have shown less knowledge of me as I seemed to be, and as I really was. I hoped to bring you back, Martin, penitent and humbled. I hoped to distress you into coming back to me. Much as I loved you, I had that to acknowledge which I could not reconcile it to myself to avow, then, unless you made submission to me, first. Thus it was I lost you. If I have had, indirectly, any act or part in the fate of that unhappy man, by putting means, however small, within his reach; Heaven forgive me! I might have known, perhaps, that he would misuse money; that it was ill bestowed upon him; and that sown by his hands, it could engender mischief only. But I never thought of him at that time, as having the disposition or ability to be a serious impostor, or otherwise than as a thoughtless, idle-humoured, dissipated spendthrift, sinning more against himself than others, and frequenting low haunts and indulging vicious tastes, to his own ruin only."

"Beggin' your pardon, sir," said Mr. Tapley, who had Mrs. Lupin on his arm by this time, quite agreeably; "if I may make so bold as say so, my opinion is, as you was quite correct, and that he turned out perfectly nat'ral for all that. There's a surprisin' number of men, sir, who as long as they've only got their own shoes and stockings to depend upon, will walk downhill, along the gutters quiet enough, and by themselves, and not do much harm. But set any on 'em up with a coach and horses, sir; and it's wonderful what a knowledge of drivin' he'll show, and how he'll fill his vehicle with passengers, and start off in the middle of the road, neck or nothing, to the Devil! Bless your heart, sir, there's ever so many Tiggs a passing this here Temple-gate any hour in the day, that only want a chance, to turn out full-blown Montagues every one!"

"Your ignorance, as you call it, Mark," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "is wiser than some men's enlightenment, and mine among them. You are right; not for the first time to-day. Now hear me out, my dears. And hear me, you, who, if what I have been told be accurately stated, are Bankrupt in pocket no less than in good name! And when you have heard me, leave this place, and poison my sight no more!"

Mr. Pecksniff laid his hand upon his breast, and bowed again.

"The penance I have done in his house," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "has carried this reflection with it constantly, above all others. That if it had pleased Heaven to visit such infirmity on my old age as really had reduced me to the state in which I feigned to be, I should have brought its misery upon myself. Oh you whose wealth, like mine, has been a source of continual unhappiness, leading you to distrust the nearest and dearest, and to dig yourself a living grave of suspicion and reserve; take heed that, having cast off all whom you might have bound to you, and tenderly, you do not become in your decay the instrument of such a man as this, and waken in another world to the knowledge of such wrong, as would embitter Heaven itself, if wrong or you could ever reach it!"

And then he told them, how he had sometimes thought, in the beginning, that love might grow up between Mary and Martin; and how he had pleased his fancy with the picture of observing it when it was new, and taking them to task, apart, in counterfeited doubt, and then confessing to them that it had been an object dear to his heart; and by his sympathy with them, and generous provision for their young fortunes, establishing a claim on their affection and regard which nothing should wither, and which should surround his old age with means of happiness. How in the first dawn of this design, and when the pleasure of such a scheme for the happiness of others was new and indistinct within him, Martin had come to tell him that he had already chosen for himself; knowing that he, the old man, had some faint project on that head, but ignorant whom it concerned. How it was little comfort to him to know that Martin had chosen Her, because the grace of his design was lost, and because finding that she had returned his love, he tortured himself with the reflection that they, so young, to whom he had been so kind a benefactor, were already like the world, and bent on their own selfish, stealthy ends. How in the bitterness of this impression, and of his past experience, he had reproached Martin so harshly (forgetting that he had never invited his confidence on such a point, and confounding what he had meant to do with what he had done), that high words sprung up between them, and they separated in wrath. How he loved him still, and hoped he would return. How on the night of his illness at the Dragon, he had secretly written tenderly of him, and made him his heir, and sanctioned his marriage with Mary:

and how, after his interview with Mr. Pecksniff, he had distrusted him again, and burnt the paper to ashes, and had lain down in his bed distracted by suspicions, doubts, and regrets.

And then he told them how, resolved to probe this Pecksniff, and to prove the constancy and truth of Mary (to himself no less than Martin), he had conceived and entered on his plan; and how, beneath her gentleness and patience, he had softened more and more; still more and more beneath the goodness and simplicity, the honour and the manly faith of Tom. And when he spoke of Tom, he said God bless him! and the tears were in his eyes; for he said that Tom, mistrusted and disliked by him at first, had come like summer rain upon his heart; and had disposed it to believe in better things. And Martin took him by the hand, and Mary too, and John, his old friend, stoutly too; and Mark, and Mrs. Lupin, and his sister, little Ruth. And peace of mind, deep, tranquil peace of mind, was in Tom's heart.

The old man then related how nobly Mr. Pecksniff had performed the duty in which he stood indebted to society, in the matter of Tom's dismissal; and how, having often heard disparagement of Mr. Westlock from Pecksniffian lips, and knowing him to be a friend to Tom, he had used, through his confidential agent and solicitor, that little artifice which had kept him in readiness to receive his unknown friend in London. And he called on Mr. Pecksniff (by the name of Scoundrel) to remember that there again he had not trapped him to do evil, but that he had done it of his own free will and agency; nay, that he had cautioned him against it. And once again he called on Mr. Pecksniff (by the name of Hang-dog) to remember that when Martin coming home at last, an altered man, had sued for the forgiveness which awaited him, he, Pecksniff, had rejected him in language of his own, and had remorselessly stepped in between him and the least touch of natural tenderness. "For which," said the old man, "if the bending of my finger would remove a halter from your neck, I wouldn't bend it!"

"Martin," he added, "your rival has not been a dangerous one, but Mrs. Lupin here, has played duenna for some weeks; not so much to watch your love as to watch her lover. For that Ghoul"—his fertility in finding names for Mr. Pecksniff was astonishing—"would have crawled into her daily walks otherwise, and polluted the fresh air. What's this? Her hand is trembling strangely. See if you can hold it."

Hold it! If he clasped it half as tightly as he did her waist.—Well, well! That's dangerous.

But it was good in him that even then, in his high fortune and happiness, with her lips nearly printed on his own, and her proud young beauty in his close embrace, he had a hand still left to stretch out to Tom Pinch.

"Oh, Tom! Dear Tom! I saw you, accidentally, coming here. Forgive me!"

"Forgive!" cried Tom. "I'll never forgive you as long as I live, Martin, if you say another

syllable about it. Joy to you both! Joy, my dear fellow, fifty thousand times."

Joy! There is not a blessing on earth that Tom did not wish them. There is not a blessing on earth that Tom would not have bestowed upon them, if he could.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Tapley, stepping forward; "but you was mentionin', just now, a lady of the name of Lupin, sir."

"I was," returned old Martin.

"Yes, sir. It's a pretty name, sir?"

"A very good name," said Martin.



THE FALL OF PECKSNIFF.

"It seems a'most a pity to change such a name into Tapley. Don't it, sir?" said Mark

"That depends upon the lady. What is *her* opinion?"

"Why, sir," said Mr. Tapley, retiring, with a bow, towards the buxom hostess, "her opinion is as the name ain't a change for the better, but the individual may be; and therefore, if nobody ain't acquainted with no jest cause or impediment, et cetera, the Blue Dragon will be converted into the Jolly Tapley. A sign of my own invention, sir. Wery new, convivial, and expressive!"

The whole of these proceedings were so agreeable to Mr. Pecksniff, that he stood with his eyes fixed upon the floor and his hands clasping one another alternately, as if a host of penal sentences were being passed upon him. Not only did his figure appear to have shrunk, but his discomfiture seemed to have extended itself, even to his dress. His clothes seemed to have grown shabbier, his linen to have turned yellow, his hair to have become lank and frowzy; his very boots looked villanous and dim, as if their gloss had departed with his own.

Feeling, rather than seeing, that the old man

now pointed to the door, he raised his eyes, picked up his hat, and thus addressed him :

"Mr. Chuzzlewit, sir! you have partaken of my hospitality."

"And paid for it," he observed.

"Thank you. That savours," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking out his pocket-handkerchief, "of your old familiar frankness. You have paid for it. I was about to make the remark. You have deceived me, sir. Thank you again. I am glad of it. To see you in the possession of your health and faculties on any terms is, in itself, a sufficient recompense. To have been deceived, implies a trusting nature. Mine is a trusting nature. I am thankful for it. I would rather have a trusting nature, do you know, sir, than a doubting one!"

Here Mr. Pecksniff, with a sad smile, bowed, and wiped his eyes.

"There is hardly any person present, Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Pecksniff, "by whom I have *not* been deceived. I have forgiven those persons on the spot. That was my duty; and, of course, I have done it. Whether it was worthy of you to partake of my hospitality, and to act the part you did act in my house; that, sir, is a question which I leave to your own conscience. And your conscience does not acquit you. No, sir, no!"

Pronouncing these last words in a loud and solemn voice, Mr. Pecksniff was not so absolutely lost in his own fervour as to be unmindful of the expediency of getting a little nearer to the door.

"I have been struck this day," said Mr. Pecksniff, "with a walking-stick (which I have every reason to believe has knobs upon it), on that delicate and exquisite portion of the human anatomy, the brain. Several blows have been inflicted, sir, without a walking-stick, upon that tenderer portion of my frame: my heart. You have mentioned, sir, my being bankrupt in my purse. Yes, sir, I am. By an unfortunate speculation, combined with treachery, I find myself reduced to poverty; at a time, sir, when the child of my bosom is widowed, and affliction and disgrace are in my family."

Here Mr. Pecksniff wiped his eyes again, and gave himself two or three little knocks upon the breast, as if he were answering two or three other little knocks from within, given by the tinkling hammer of his conscience, to express "Cheer up, my boy!"

"I know the human mind, although I trust it. That is my weakness. Do I not know, sir;" here he became exceedingly plaintive, and was observed to glance towards Tom

Pinch; "that my misfortunes bring this treatment on me? Do I not know, sir, that but for them I never should have heard what I have heard to-day? Do I not know, that in the silence and the solitude of night, a little voice will whisper in your ear, Mr. Chuzzlewit, 'This was not well. This was not well, sir!' Think of this, sir (if you will have the goodness), remote from the impulses of passion, and apart from the specialities, if I may use that strong remark, of prejudice. And if you ever contemplate the silent tomb, sir, which you will excuse me for entertaining some doubt of your doing, after the conduct into which you have allowed yourself to be betrayed this day; if you ever contemplate the silent tomb, sir, think of me. If you find yourself approaching to the silent tomb, sir, think of me. If you should wish to have anything inscribed upon your silent tomb, sir, let it be, that I—ah, my remorseful sir! that I—the humble individual who has now the honour of reproaching you: forgave you. That I forgave you when my injuries were fresh, and when my bosom was newly wrung. It may be bitterness to you to hear it now, sir, but you will live to seek a consolation in it. May you find a consolation in it, when you want it, sir! Good morning!"

With this sublime address, Mr. Pecksniff departed. But the effect of his departure was much impaired by his being immediately afterwards run against, and nearly knocked down by, a monstrosly-excited little man in velveteen shorts and a very tall hat; who came bursting up the stairs, and straight into the chambers of Mr. Chuzzlewit, as if he were deranged.

"Is there anybody here that knows him?" cried the little man. "Is there anybody here that knows him? Oh, my stars, is there anybody here that knows him!"

They looked at each other for an explanation; but nobody knew anything more than that here was an excited little man with a very tall hat on, running in and out of the room as hard as he could go; making his single pair of bright blue stockings appear at least a dozen; and constantly repeating in a shrill voice, "Is there anybody here that knows him?"

"If your brains is not turned topjy tuijey, Mr. Sweedlepipes!" exclaimed another voice, "hold that there nige of yourn, I beg you, sir."

At the same time Mrs. Gamp was seen in the doorway; out of breath from coming up so many stairs, and panting fearfully; but dropping curtseys to the last.

"Excuse the weakness of the man," said Mrs. Gamp, eyeing Mr. Sweedlepipe with great in-

dignation; "and well I might expect it, as I should have know'd, and wishin' he was drowned in the Thames afore I had brought him here, which not a blessed hour ago he nearly shaved the noge off from the father of as lovely a family as ever, Mr. Chuzzlewit, was born three sets of twins, and would have done it, only he see it a goin' in the glass, and dodged the rager. And never, Mr. Sweedlepipes, I do assure you, sir, did I so well know what a misfortun it was to be acquainted with you, as now I do, which so I say, sir, and I don't deceive you!"

"I ask your pardon, ladies and gentlemen all," cried the little barber, taking off his hat, "and yours too, Mrs. Gamp. But—but," he added this, half-laughing and half-crying, "Is there anybody here that knows him!"

As the barber said these words, a something in top-boots, with its head bandaged up, staggered into the room, and began going round and round and round, apparently under the impression that it was walking straight forward.

"Look at him!" cried the excited little barber. "Here he is! That'll soon wear off, and then he'll be all right again. He's no more dead than I am. He's all alive and hearty. Ain't you, Bailey?"

"R—r—reether so, Poll!" replied that gentleman.

"Look here!" cried the little barber, laughing and crying in the same breath. "When I steady him he comes all right. There! He's all right now. Nothing's the matter with him now, except that he's a little shook and rather giddy; is there, Bailey?"

"R—r—reether shook, Poll—reether so!" said Mr. Bailey. "What, my lovely Sairey! There you air!"

"What a boy he is!" cried the tender-hearted Poll, actually sobbing over him. "I never see sech a boy! It's all his fun. He's full of it. He shall go into the business along with me. I am determined he shall. We'll make it Sweedlepipe and Bailey. He shall have the sporting branch (what a one he'll be for the matches!) and me the shavin'. I'll make over the birds to him as soon as ever he's well enough. He shall have the little bullfinch in the shop, and all. He's sech a boy! I ask your pardon, ladies and gentlemen, but I thought there might be some one here that know'd him!"

Mrs. Gamp had observed, not without jealousy and scorn, that a favourable impression appeared to exist in behalf of Mr. Sweedlepipe and his young friend; and that she had fallen rather into the background in consequence.

She now struggled to the front, therefore, and stated her business.

"Which, Mr. Chuzzlewit," she said, "is well beknown to Mrs. Harris as has one sweet infant (though she *do* not wish it known) in her own family by the mother's side kep in spirits in a bottle; and that sweet babe she see at Greenwich Fair, a travelling in company with the pink-eyed lady, Prooshan dwarf, and livin' skelinton, which judge her feelins wen the barrel organ played, and she was showed her own dear sister's child, the same not bein' expected from the outside picter, where it was painted quite contrary in a livin' state, a many sizes larger, and performing beautiful upon the Arp, which never did that dear child know or do; since breathe it never did, to speak on, in this wale! And Mrs. Harris, Mr. Chuzzlewit, has knowed me many year, and can give you information that the lady which is widdered can't do better and may do worse, than let me wait upon her, which I hope to do. Permittin' the sweet faces as I see afore me."

"Oh!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "Is that your business? Was this good person paid for the trouble we gave her?"

"I paid her, sir," returned Mark Tapley; "liberal."

"The young man's words is true," said Mrs. Gamp, "and thank you kindly."

"Then here we will close our acquaintance, Mrs. Gamp," retorted Mr. Chuzzlewit. "And Mr. Sweedlepipe—is that your name?"

"That is my name, sir," replied Poll, accepting with a profusion of gratitude, some chinking pieces which the old man slipped into his hand.

"Mr. Sweedlepipe, take as much care of your lady-lodger as you can, and give her a word or two of good advice now and then. Such," said old Martin, looking gravely at the astonished Mrs. Gamp, "as hinting at the expediency of a little less liquor, and a little more humanity, and a little less regard for herself, and a little more regard for her patients, and perhaps a trifle of additional honesty. Or when Mrs. Gamp gets into trouble, Mr. Sweedlepipe, it had better not be at a time when I am near enough to the Old Bailey, to volunteer myself as a witness to her character. Endeavour to impress that upon her at your leisure, if you please."

Mrs. Gamp clasped her hands, turned up her eyes until they were quite invisible, threw back her bonnet for the admission of fresh air to her heated brow; and in the act of saying faintly—"Less liquor!—Sairey Gamp—Bottle on the chimley-piece, and let me put my lips to it

when I am so disposed!"—fell into one of the walking swoons, in which pitiable state she was conducted forth by Mr. Sweedlepipe, who, between his two patients, the swooning Mrs. Gamp and the revolving Bailey, had enough to do, poor fellow.

The old man looked about him with a smile, until his eyes rested on Tom Pinch's sister; when he smiled the more.

"We will all dine here together," he said; "and as you and Mary have enough to talk of, Martin, you shall keep house for us until the afternoon, with Mr. and Mrs. Tapley. I must see your lodgings in the meanwhile, Tom."

Tom was quite delighted. So was Ruth. She would go with them.

"Thank you, my love," said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "But I am afraid I must take Tom a little out of the way, on business. Suppose you go on first, my dear?"

Pretty little Ruth was equally delighted to do that.

"But not alone," said Martin, "not alone. Mr. Westlock, I dare say, will escort you."

Why, of course he would: what else had Mr. Westlock in his mind? How dull these old men are!

"You are sure you have no engagement?" he persisted.

Engagement! As if he could have any engagement!

So they went off arm in arm. When Tom and Mr. Chuzzlewit went off arm in arm a few minutes after them, the latter was still smiling: and really, for a gentleman of his habits, in rather a knowing manner.

CHAPTER LIII.

WHAT JOHN WESTLOCK SAID TO TOM PINCH'S SISTER; WHAT TOM PINCH'S SISTER SAID TO JOHN WESTLOCK; WHAT TOM PINCH SAID TO BOTH OF THEM; AND HOW THEY ALL PASSED THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY.

BRILLIANTLY the Temple Fountain sparkled in the sun, and laughingly its liquid music played, and merrily the idle drops of water danced and danced, and peeping out in sport among the trees, plunged lightly down to hide themselves, as little Ruth and her companion came towards it.

And why they came towards the Fountain at all is a mystery; for they had no business there. It was not in their way. It was quite out of their way. They had no more to do with the

Fountain, bless you, than they had with—with Love, or any out of the way thing of that sort.

It was all very well for Tom and his sister to make appointments by the Fountain, but that was quite another affair. Because, of course, when she had to wait a minute or two, it would have been very awkward for her to have had to wait in any but a tolerably quiet spot; and that was as quiet a spot, everything considered, as they could choose. But when she had John Westlock to take care of her, and was going home with her arm in his (home being in a different direction altogether), their coming anywhere near that Fountain, was quite extraordinary.

However, there they found themselves. And another extraordinary part of the matter was, that they seemed to have come there, by a silent understanding. Yet when they got there, they were a little confused by being there, which was the strangest part of all; because there is nothing naturally confusing in a Fountain. We all know that.

What a good old place it was! John said. With quite an earnest affection for it.

"A pleasant place indeed," said little Ruth. "So shady!"

Oh wicked little Ruth!

They came to a stop when John began to praise it. The day was exquisite; and stopping at all, it was quite natural—nothing could be more so—that they should glance down Garden Court; because Garden Court ends in the Garden, and the Garden ends in the River, and that glimpse is very bright and fresh and shining on a summer's day. Then oh little Ruth, why not look boldly at it! Why fit that tiny, precious, blessed little foot into the cracked corner of an insensible old flagstone in the pavement; and be so very anxious to adjust it to a nicety!

If the Fiery faced matron in the crunched bonnet could have seen them as they walked away, how many years' purchase, might Fiery Face have been disposed to take for her situation in Furnival's Inn as laundress to Mr. Westlock!

They went away, but not through London's streets! Through some enchanted city, where the pavements were of air; where all the rough sounds of a stirring town were softened into gentle music; where every thing was happy; where there was no distance, and no time. There were two good-tempered burly draymen letting down big butts of beer into a cellar somewhere; and when John helped her—almost lifted her—the lightest, easiest, neatest thing you ever saw—across the rope, they said he owed them a good turn for giving him the chance. Celestial draymen!

Green pastures in the summer tide, deep-littered straw-yards in the winter, no stint of corn and clover, ever, to that noble horse who *would* dance on the pavement with a gig behind him, and who frightened her, and made her clasp his arm with both hands (both hands: meeting one upon the other, so endearingly!), and caused her to implore him to take refuge in the pastry-cook's; and afterwards to peep out at the door so shrinkingly; and then: looking at him with those eyes: to ask him was he sure—now was he sure—they might go safely on! Oh for a string of rampant horses! For a lion, for a bear, a mad bull, anything to bring the little hands together on his arm, again!

They talked, of course. They talked of Tom, and all these changes, and the attachment Mr. Chuzzlewit had conceived for him, and the bright prospects he had in such a friend, and a great deal more to the same purpose. The more they talked, the more afraid this fluttering little Ruth became of any pause; and sooner than have a pause she would say the same things over again; and if she hadn't courage or presence of mind enough for that (to say the truth she very seldom had), she was ten thousand times more charming and irresistible than she had been before.

"Martin will be married very soon now, I suppose," said John.

She supposed he would. Never did a bewitching little woman suppose anything in such a faint voice as Ruth supposed that.

But feeling that another of those alarming pauses was approaching, she remarked that he would have a beautiful wife. Didn't Mr. Westlock think so?

"Ye—yes," said John: "oh, yes."

She feared he was rather hard to please, he spoke so coldly.

"Rather say already pleased," said John. "I have scarcely seen her. I had no care to see her. I had no eyes for *her*, this morning."

Oh, good gracious!

It was well they had reached their destination. She never could have gone any further. It would have been impossible to walk in such a tremble.

Tom had not come in. They entered the triangular parlour together, and alone. Fiery Face, Fiery Face, how many years' purchase *now!*

She sat down on the little sofa, and untied her bonnet-strings. He sat down by her side, and very near her: very, very near her. Oh, rapid, swelling, bursting little heart, you knew

that it would come to this, and hoped it would. Why beat so wildly, heart!

"Dear Ruth! Sweet Ruth! If I had loved you less, I could have told you that I loved you, long ago. I have loved you from the first. There never was a creature in the world more truly loved than you, dear Ruth, by me!"

She clasped her little hands before her face. The gushing tears of joy, and pride, and hope, and innocent affection, would not be restrained. Fresh from her full young heart they came to answer him.

"My dear love! If this is—I almost dare to hope it is, now—not painful or distressing to you, you make me happier than I can tell, or you imagine. Darling Ruth! My own good, gentle, winning Ruth! I hope I know the value of your heart, I hope I know the worth of your angel nature. Let me try and show you that I do; and you will make me happier, Ruth—"

"Not happier," she sobbed, "than you make me. No one can be happier, John, than you make me!"

Fiery Face, provide yourself! The usual wages or the usual warning. It's all over, Fiery Face. We needn't trouble you any further.

The little hands could meet each other now, without a rampant horse to urge them. There was no occasion for lions, bears, or mad bulls. It could all be done, and infinitely better, without their assistance. No burly drayman or big butts of beer, were wanted for apologies. No apology at all was wanted. The soft, light touch fell coyly, but quite naturally, upon the lover's shoulder; the delicate waist, the drooping head, the blushing cheek, the beautiful eyes, the exquisite mouth itself, were all as natural as possible. If all the horses in Araby had run away at once, they couldn't have improved upon it.

They soon began to talk of Tom again.

"I hope he will be glad to hear of it!" said John, with sparkling eyes.

Ruth drew the little hands a little tighter when he said it, and looked up seriously into his face.

"I am never to leave him, *am* I, dear? I could never leave Tom. I am sure you know that."

"Do you think I would ask you?" he returned, with a—well! Never mind with what.

"I am sure you never would," she answered, the bright tears standing in her eyes.

"And I will swear it, Ruth, my darling, if you please. Leave Tom! That would be a strange beginning. Leave Tom, dear! If Tom and we be not inseparable, and Tom (God bless

him) have not all honour and all love in our home, my little wife, may that home never be! And that's a strong oath, Ruth."

Shall it be recorded how she thanked him? Yes, it shall. In all simplicity and innocence and purity of heart, yet with a timid, graceful, half-determined hesitation, she set a little rosy seal upon the vow, whose colour was reflected in her face, and flashed up to the braiding of her dark brown hair.

"Tom will be so happy, and so proud, and glad," she said, clasping her little hands. "But so surprised! I am sure he has never thought of such a thing."

Of course John asked her immediately—because you know they were in that foolish state when great allowances must be made—when *she* had begun to think of such a thing, and this made a little diversion in their talk; a charming diversion to them, but not so interesting to us; at the end of which, they came back to Tom again.

"Ah! dear Tom!" said Ruth. "I suppose I ought to tell you everything now. I should have no secrets from you. Should I, John, love?"

It is of no use saying how that preposterous John answered her, because he answered in a manner which is untranslatable on paper, though highly satisfactory in itself. But what he conveyed was, No no no, sweet Ruth; or something to that effect.

Then she told him Tom's great secret; not exactly saying how she had found it out, but leaving him to understand it if he liked; and John was sadly grieved to hear it, and was full of sympathy and sorrow. But they would try, he said, only the more, on this account, to make him happy, and to beguile him with his favourite pursuits. And then, in all the confidence of such a time, he told her how he had a capital opportunity of establishing himself in his old profession in the country; and how he had been thinking, in the event of that happiness coming upon him which had actually come—there was another slight diversion here—how he had been thinking that it would afford occupation to Tom, and enable them to live together in the easiest manner, without any sense of dependence on Tom's part; and to be as happy as the day was long. And Ruth receiving this with joy, they went on catering for Tom to that extent that they had already purchased him a select library and built him an organ, on which he was performing with the greatest satisfaction: when they heard him knocking at the door.

Though she longed to tell him what had hap-

pened, poor little Ruth was greatly agitated by his arrival; the more so because she knew that Mr. Chuzzlewit was with him. So she said, all in a tremble:

"What shall I do, dear John! I can't bear that he should hear it from any one but me, and I could not tell him unless we were alone."

"Do, my love," said John, "whatever is natural to you on the impulse of the moment, and I am sure it will be right."

He had hardly time to say thus much, and Ruth had hardly time to—just to get a little farther off—upon the sofa, when Tom and Mr. Chuzzlewit came in. Mr. Chuzzlewit came first, and Tom was a few seconds behind him.

Now Ruth had hastily resolved that she would beckon Tom up-stairs after a short time, and would tell him in his little bedroom. But when she saw his dear old face come in, her heart was so touched that she ran into his arms, and laid her head down on his breast, and sobbed out, "Bless me, Tom! My dearest brother!"

Tom looked up, in surprise, and saw John Westlock close beside him, holding out his hand.

"John!" cried Tom. "John!"

"Dear Tom," said his friend, "give me your hand. We are brothers, Tom."

Tom wrung it with all his force, embraced his sister fervently, and put her in John Westlock's arms.

"Don't speak to me, John. Heaven is very good to us. I——" Tom could find no further utterance, but left the room; and Ruth went after him.

And when they came back, which they did by-and-by, she looked more beautiful, and Tom more good and true (if that were possible) than ever. And though Tom could not speak upon the subject even now: being yet too newly glad: he put both his hands in both of John's with emphasis sufficient for the best speech ever spoken.

"I am glad you chose to-day," said Mr. Chuzzlewit to John; with the same knowing smile as when they had left him. "I thought you would. I hope Tom and I lingered behind a discreet time. It's so long since I had any practical knowledge of these subjects, that I have been anxious, I assure you."

"Your knowledge is still pretty accurate, sir," returned John, laughing, "if it led you to foresee what would happen to-day."

"Why, I am not sure, Mr. Westlock," said the old man, "that any great spirit of prophecy was needed, after seeing you and Ruth together.

Come hither, pretty one. See what Tom and I purchased this morning, while you were dealing in exchange with that young merchant there."

The old man's way of seating her beside him, and humouring his voice as if she were a child, was whimsical enough, but full of tenderness, and not ill adapted, somehow, to little Ruth.

"See here!" he said, taking a case from his pocket, "what a beautiful necklace. Ah! How it glitters! Earrings too, and bracelets, and a zone for your waist. This set is yours, and Mary has another like it. Tom couldn't understand why I wanted two. What a short-sighted Tom! Earrings and bracelets, and a zone for your waist! Ah! beautiful! Let us see how brave they look. Ask Mr. Westlock to clasp them on."

It was the prettiest thing to see her holding out her round, white arm; and John (oh deep, deep John!) pretending that the bracelet was very hard to fasten; it was the prettiest thing to see her girding on the precious little zone, and yet obliged to have assistance because her fingers were in such terrible perplexity; it was the prettiest thing to see her so confused and bashful, with the smiles and blushes playing brightly on her face; like the sparkling light upon the jewels; it was the prettiest thing that you would see, in the common experiences of a twelvemonth, rely upon it.

"The set of jewels and the wearer are so well matched," said the old man, "that I don't know which becomes the other most. Mr. Westlock could tell me, I have no doubt; but I'll not ask him, for he is bribed. Health to wear them, my dear, and happiness to make you forgetful of them, except as a remembrance from a loving friend!"

He patted her upon the cheek, and said to Tom:

"I must play the part of a father here, Tom, also. There are not many fathers who marry two such daughters on the same day: but we will overlook the improbability for the gratification of an old man's fancy. I may claim that much indulgence," he added, "for I have gratified few fancies enough in my life tending to the happiness of others, Heaven knows!"

These various proceedings had occupied so much time, and they fell into such a pleasant conversation now, that it was within a quarter of an hour of the time appointed for dinner before any of them thought about it. A hackney-coach soon carried them to the Temple, however; and there they found everything prepared for their reception.

Mr. Tapley having been furnished with un-

limited credentials relative to the ordering of dinner, had so exerted himself for the honour of the party, that a prodigious banquet was served, under the joint direction of himself and his Intended. Mr. Chuzzlewit would have had them of the party, and Martin urgently seconded his wish, but Mark could by no means be persuaded to sit down at table; observing, that in having the honour of attending to their comforts, he felt himself, indeed, the landlord of the Jolly Tapley, and could almost delude himself into the belief that the entertainment was actually being held under the Jolly Tapley's roof.

For the better encouragement of himself in this fable, Mr. Tapley took it upon him to issue divers general directions to the waiters from the hotel, relative to the disposal of the dishes and so forth; and as they were usually in direct opposition to all precedent, and were always issued in his most facetious form of thought and speech, they occasioned great merriment among these attendants; in which Mr. Tapley participated, with an infinite enjoyment of his own humour. He likewise entertained them with short anecdotes of his travels, appropriate to the occasion; and now and then with some comic passage or other between himself and Mrs. Lupin; so that explosive laughs were constantly issuing from the sideboard, and from the backs of chairs; and the head-waiter (who wore powder, and knee-smalls, and was usually a grave man) got to be a bright scarlet in the face, and broke his waistcoat-strings, audibly.

Young Martin sat at the head of the table, and Tom Pinch at the foot; and if there were a genial face at that board, it was Tom's. They all took their tone from Tom. Everybody drank to him, everybody looked to him, everybody thought of him, everybody loved him. If he so much as laid down his knife and fork, somebody put out a hand to shake with him. Martin and Mary had taken him aside before dinner, and spoken to him so heartily of the time to come: laying such fervent stress upon the trust they had in his completion of their felicity, by his society and closest friendship: that Tom was positively moved to tears. He couldn't bear it. His heart was full, he said, of happiness. And so it was. Tom spoke the honest truth. It was. Large as thy heart was, dear Tom Pinch, it had no room that day, for anything but happiness and sympathy!

And there was Fips, old Fips of Austin Friars, present at the dinner, and turning out to be the jolliest old dog that ever did violence to his convivial sentiments by shutting himself up in a dark office. "Where is he!" said Fips, when

he came in. And then he pounced on Tom, and told him that he wanted to relieve himself of all his old constraint: and in the first place shook him by one hand, and in the second place shook him by the other, and in the third place nudged him in the waistcoat, and in the fourth place, said, "How *are* you!" and in a great many other places did a great many other things to show his friendliness and joy. And he sang songs, did Fips; and made speeches, did Fips; and knocked off his wine pretty handsomely, did Fips; and, in short, he showed himself a perfect Trump, did Fips, in all respects.

But ah! the happiness of strolling home at night—obstinate little Ruth, she wouldn't hear of riding!—as they had done on that dear night from Furnival's Inn! The happiness of being able to talk about it, and to confide their happiness to each other! The happiness of stating all their little plans to Tom, and seeing his bright face grow brighter as they spoke!

When they reached home, Tom left John and his sister in the parlour, and went up-stairs into his own room, under pretence of seeking a book. And Tom actually winked to himself, when he got up-stairs: he thought it such a deep thing to have done.

"They like to be by themselves, of course," said Tom: "and I came away so naturally, that I have no doubt they are expecting me, every moment, to return. That's capital!"

But he had not sat reading very long, when he heard a tap at his door.

"May I come in?" said John.

"Oh, surely!" Tom replied.

"Don't leave us, Tom. Don't sit by yourself. We want to make you merry; not melancholy."

"My dear friend," said Tom, with a cheerful smile.

"Brother, Tom. Brother."

"My dear brother," said Tom; "there is no danger of my being melancholy, how can I be melancholy, when I know that you and Ruth are so blest in each other! I think I can find my tongue to-night, John," he added, after a moment's pause. "But I never can tell you what unutterable joy this day has given me. It would be unjust to you to speak of your having chosen a portionless girl, for I feel that you know her worth; I am sure you know her worth. Nor will it diminish your estimation, John, which money might."

"Which money would, Tom," he returned.

"Her worth! Oh, who could see her here, and not love her! Who could know her, Tom, and not honour her! Who could ever stand pos-

sessed of such a heart as hers, and grow indifferent to the treasure! Who could feel the rapture that I feel to-day, and love as I love her, Tom, without knowing something of her worth! Your joy unutterable! No, no, Tom. It's mine, it's mine."

"No, no, John," said Tom. "It's mine, it's mine."

Their friendly contention was brought to a close by little Ruth herself, who came peeping in at the door. And oh, the look, the glorious, half-proud, half-timid look she gave Tom, when her lover drew her to his side! As much as to say, "Yes indeed, Tom, he will do it. But then he has a right you know. Because I *am* fond of him, Tom."

As to Tom, he was perfectly delighted. He could have sat and looked at them, just as they were, for hours.

"I have told Tom, love, as we agreed, that we are not going to permit him to run away, and that we cannot possibly allow it. The loss of one person, and such a person as Tom, too, out of our small household of three, is not to be endured; and so I have told him. Whether he is considerate, or whether he is only selfish, I don't know. But he needn't be considerate, for he is not the least restraint upon us. Is he, dearest Ruth?"

Well! He really did not seem to be any particular restraint upon them. Judging from what ensued.

Was it folly in Tom to be so pleased by their remembrance of him, at such a time? Was their graceful love a folly, were their dear caresses follies, was their lengthened parting folly? Was it folly in him to watch her window from the street, and rate its scantiest gleam of light above all diamonds; folly in her to breathe his name upon her knees, and pour out her pure heart before that Being, from whom such hearts and such affections come!

If these be follies, then Fiery Face go on and prosper! If they be not, then Fiery Face avaunt! But set the crunched bonnet at some other single gentleman, in any case, for one is lost to thee for ever!

CHAPTER LIV.

GIVES THE AUTHOR GREAT CONCERN. FOR IT IS THE LAST IN THE BOOK.

TODGERS'S was in high feather, and mighty preparations for a late breakfast were astir in its commercial bowers. The blissful morn-

ing had arrived, when Miss Pecksniff was to be united, in holy matrimony, to Augustus.

Miss Pecksniff was in a frame of mind equally becoming to herself and the occasion. She was full of clemency and conciliation. She had laid in several chaldrons of live coals, and was prepared to heap them on the heads of her enemies. She bore no spite nor malice in her heart. Not the least.

Quarrels, Miss Pecksniff said, were dreadful things in families; and though she never could

forgive her dear papa, she was willing to receive her other relations. They had been separated, she observed, too long. It was enough to call down a judgment upon the family. She believed the death of Jonas *was* a judgment on them for their internal dissensions. And Miss Pecksniff was confirmed in this belief, by the lightness with which the visitation had fallen on herself.

By way of doing sacrifice—not in triumph; not, of course, in triumph, but in humiliation of spirit—this amiable young person wrote, there-



"YES, SIR," RETURNED MISS PECKSNIFF, MODESTLY. "I AM. I—MY DRESS IS RATHER—
REALLY, MRS. TODGERS!"

fore, to her kinswoman of the strong mind, and informed her, that her nuptials would take place on such a day. That she had been much hurt by the unnatural conduct of herself and daughters, and hoped they might not have suffered in their consciences. That being desirous to forgive her enemies, and make her peace with the world before entering into the most solemn of covenants with the most devoted of men, she now held out the hand of friendship. That if the strong-minded woman took that hand, in the

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, 27.

temper in which it was extended to her, she, Miss Pecksniff, did invite her to be present at the ceremony of her marriage, and did furthermore invite the three red-nosed spinsters, her daughters (but Miss Pecksniff did not particularise their noses), to attend as bridesmaids.

The strong-minded woman returned for answer, that herself and daughters were, as regarded their consciences, in the enjoyment of robust health, which she knew Miss Pecksniff would be glad to hear. That she had received Miss

Pecksniff's note with unalloyed delight, because she never had attached the least importance to the paltry and insignificant jealousies with which herself and circle had been assailed; otherwise than as she found them, in the contemplation, a harmless source of innocent mirth. That she would joyfully attend Miss Pecksniff's bridal; and that her three dear daughters would be happy to assist, on so interesting, and *so very unexpected*—which the strong-minded woman underlined—*so very unexpected* an occasion.

On the receipt of this gracious reply, Miss Pecksniff extended her forgiveness and her invitations to Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe; to Mr. George Chuzzlewit, the bachelor cousin; to the solitary female who usually had the toothache; and to the hairy young gentleman with the outline of a face; surviving remnants of the party that had once assembled in Mr. Pecksniff's parlour. After which, Miss Pecksniff remarked, that there was a sweetness in doing our duty, which neutralised the bitter in our cups.

The wedding guests had not yet assembled, and indeed it was so early that Miss Pecksniff herself was in the act of dressing at her leisure, when a carriage stopped near the Monument; and Mark, dismounting from the rumble, assisted Mr. Chuzzlewit to alight. The carriage remained in waiting; so did Mr. Tapley. Mr. Chuzzlewit betook himself to Todgers's.

He was shown, by the degenerate successor of Mr. Bailey, into the dining-parlour; where—for his visit was expected—Mrs. Todgers immediately appeared.

"You are dressed, I see, for the wedding," he said.

Mrs. Todgers, who was greatly flurried by the preparations, replied in the affirmative.

"It goes against my wishes to have it in progress just now, I assure you, sir," said Mrs. Todgers; "but Miss Pecksniff's mind was set upon it, and it really is time that Miss Pecksniff was married. That cannot be denied, sir."

"No," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "assuredly not. Her sister takes no part in the proceedings?"

"Oh dear no, sir. Poor thing!" said Mrs. Todgers, shaking her head, and dropping her voice. "Since she has known the worst, she has never left my room; the next room."

"Is she prepared to see me?" he inquired.

"Quite prepared, sir."

"Then let us lose no time."

Mrs. Todgers conducted him into the little back chamber commanding the prospect of the cistern; and there, sadly different from when it had first been her lodging, sat poor Merry, in

mourning weeds. The room looked very dark and sorrowful; and so did she; but she had one friend beside her faithful to the last. Old Chuffey.

When Mr. Chuzzlewit sat down at her side, she took his hand and put it to her lips. She was in great grief. He, too, was agitated; for he had not seen her since their parting in the churchyard.

"I judged you hastily," he said in a low voice. "I fear I judged you cruelly. Let me know that I have your forgiveness."

She kissed his hand again; and retaining it in hers, thanked him, in a broken voice, for all his kindness to her since.

"Tom Pinch," said Martin, "has faithfully related to me all that you desired him to convey; at a time when he deemed it very improbable that he would ever have an opportunity of delivering your message. Believe me that if I ever deal again with an ill-advised and unawakened nature, hiding the strength it thinks its weakness, I will have long and merciful consideration for it."

"You had for me; even for me," she answered. "I quite believe it. I said the words you have repeated, when my distress was very sharp and hard to bear; I say them now for others; but I cannot urge them for myself. You spoke to me after you had seen and watched me day by day. There was great consideration in that. You might have spoken, perhaps, more kindly; you might have tried to invite my confidence by greater gentleness; but the end would have been the same."

He shook his head in doubt, and not without some inward self-reproach.

"How can I hope," she said, "that your interposition would have prevailed with me, when I know how obdurate I was! I never thought at all; dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I never thought at all; I had no thought, no heart, no care to find one; at that time. It has grown out of my trouble. I have felt it in my trouble. I wouldn't recall my trouble, such as it is, and has been—and it is light in comparison with trials which hundreds of good people suffer every day, I know—I wouldn't recall it to-morrow, if I could. It has been my friend, for without it, no one could have changed me; nothing could have changed me. Do not mistrust me because of these tears; I cannot help them. I am grateful for it, in my soul. Indeed I am!"

"Indeed she is!" said Mrs. Todgers. "I believe it, sir."

"And so do I!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "Now,

attend to me, my dear. Your late husband's estate, if not wasted by the confession of a large debt to the broken office (which document, being useless to the runaways, has been sent over to England by them : not so much for the sake of the creditors as for the gratification of their dislike to him, whom they suppose to be still living), will be seized upon by law ; for it is not exempt, as I learn, from the claims of those who have suffered by the fraud in which he was engaged. Your father's property was all, or nearly all, embarked in the same transaction. If there be any left, it will be seized on, in like manner. There is no home *there*."

"I couldn't return to him," she said, with an instinctive reference to his having forced her marriage on. "I could not return to him !"

"I know it," Mr. Chuzzlewit resumed : "and I am here, because I know it. Come with me ! From all who are about me, you are certain (I have ascertained it) of a generous welcome. But until your health is re-established, and you are sufficiently composed to bear that welcome, you shall have your abode in any quiet retreat of your own choosing, near London ; not so far removed but that this kind-hearted lady may still visit you as often as she pleases. You have suffered much ; but you are young, and have a brighter and a better future stretching out before you. Come with me. Your sister is careless of you, I know. She hurries on and publishes her marriage, in a spirit which (to say no more of it) is barely decent, is unsisterly, and bad. Leave the house before her guests arrive. She means to give you pain. Spare her the offence, and come with me !"

Mrs. Todgers, though most unwilling to part with her, added her persuasions. Even poor old Chuffey (of course included in the project) added his. She hurriedly attired herself, and was ready to depart, when Miss Pecksniff dashed into the room.

Miss Pecksniff dashed in so suddenly, that she was placed in an embarrassing position. For, though she had completed her bridal toilette as to her head, on which she wore a bridal bonnet with orange flowers, she had not completed it as to her skirts, which displayed no choicer decoration than a dimity bedgown. She had dashed in, in fact, about half way through, to console her sister in her affliction with a sight of the aforesaid bonnet ; and being quite unconscious of the presence of a visitor, until she found Mr. Chuzzlewit standing face to face with her her surprise was an uncomfortable one.

"So, young lady !" said the old man, eyeing

her with strong disfavour. "You are to be married to-day ?"

"Yes, sir," returned Miss Pecksniff, modestly. "I am. I—my dress is rather—really, Mrs. Todgers !"

"Your delicacy," said old Martin, "is troubled, I perceive. I am not surprised to find it so. You have chosen the period of your marriage unfortunately."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Chuzzlewit," retorted Cherry ; very red and angry in a moment : "but if you have anything to say on that subject, I must beg to refer you to Augustus. You will scarcely think it manly, I hope, to force an argument on me, when Augustus is at all times ready to discuss it with you. I have nothing to do with any deceptions that may have been practised on my parent," said Miss Pecksniff, pointedly : "and as I wish to be on good terms with everybody at such a time, I should have been glad if you would have favoured us with your company at breakfast. But I will not ask you as it is : seeing that you have been prepossessed and set against me in another quarter. I hope I have my natural affections for another quarter, and my natural pity for another quarter ; but I cannot always submit to be subservient to it, Mr. Chuzzlewit. That would be a little too much. I trust I have more respect for myself, as well as for the man who claims me as his Bride."

"Your sister, meeting—as I think : not as she says, for she has said nothing about it—with little consideration from you, is going away with me," said Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"I am very happy to find that she has some good fortune at last," returned Miss Pecksniff, tossing her head. "I congratulate her, I am sure. I am not surprised that this event should be painful to her—painful to her—but I can't help that, Mr. Chuzzlewit. It's not my fault."

"Come, Miss Pecksniff !" said the old man, quietly. "I should like to see a better parting between you. I should like to see a better parting on your side, in such circumstances. It would make me your friend. You may want a friend one day or other."

"Every relation of life, Mr. Chuzzlewit, begging your pardon : and every friend in life :—" returned Miss Pecksniff, with dignity, "is now bound up and cemented in Augustus. So long as Augustus is my own, I cannot want a friend. When you speak of friends, sir, I must beg, once for all, to refer you to Augustus. That is my impression of the religious ceremony in which I am so soon to take a part at that altar to which Augustus will conduct me. I bear no malice at any time, much less in a moment of triumph,

towards any one; much less towards my sister. On the contrary, I congratulate her. If you didn't hear me say so, I am not to blame. And as I owe it to Augustus, to be punctual on an occasion when he may naturally be supposed to be—to be impatient—really, Mrs. Todgers!—I must beg your leave, sir, to retire.”

After these words the bridal bonnet disappeared; with as much state, as the dimity bed-gown left in it.

Old Martin gave his arm to the younger sister without speaking; and led her out. Mrs. Todgers with her holiday garments fluttering in the wind, accompanied them to the carriage, clung round Merry's neck at parting, and ran back to her own dingy house, crying the whole way. She had a lean lank body, Mrs. Todgers, but a well-conditioned soul within. Perhaps the good Samaritan was lean and lank, and found it hard to live. Who knows!

Mr. Chuzzlewit followed her so closely with his eyes, that until she had shut her own door, they did not encounter Mr. Tapley's face.

“Why, Mark!” he said, as soon as he observed it, “what's the matter!”

“The wonderfullest ewent, sir!” returned Mark, pumping at his voice in a most laborious manner, and hardly able to articulate with all his efforts. “A coincidence as never was equalled! I'm blessed if here ain't two old neighbours of ourn, sir!”

“What neighbours!” cried old Martin, looking out of window. “Where?”

“I was a walkin' up and down not five yards from this spot,” said Mr. Tapley, breathless, “and they come upon me like their own ghosts, as I thought they was! It's the wonderfullest ewent that ever happened. Bring a feather, somebody, and knock me down with it!”

“What do you mean!” exclaimed old Martin, quite as much excited by the spectacle of Mark's excitement, as that strange person was himself. “Neighbours, where?”

“Here, sir!” replied Mr. Tapley. “Here in the city of London! Here upon these very stones! Here they are, sir! Don't I know 'em! Lord love their welcome faces, don't I know 'em!”

With which ejaculations Mr. Tapley not only pointed to a decent-looking man and woman standing by, but commenced embracing them alternately, over and over again, in Monument Yard.

“Neighbours, WHERE!” old Martin shouted: almost maddened by his ineffectual efforts to get out at the coach-door.

“Neighbours in America! Neighbours in

Eden!” cried Mark. “Neighbours in the swamp, neighbours in the bush, neighbours in the fever. Didn't she nurse us! Didn't he help us! Shouldn't we both have died without 'em! Haven't they come a strugglin' back, without a single child for their consolation! And talk to me of neighbours!”

Away he went again in a perfectly wild state, hugging them, and skipping round them, and cutting in between them, as if he were performing some frantic and outlandish dance.

Mr. Chuzzlewit no sooner gathered who these people were, than he burst open the coach-door somehow or other, and came tumbling out among them; and as if the lunacy of Mr. Tapley were contagious, he immediately began to shake hands too, and exhibit every demonstration of the liveliest joy.

“Get up behind!” he said. “Get up in the rumble. Come along with me! Go you on the box, Mark. Home! Home!”

“Home!” cried Mr. Tapley, seizing the old man's hand in a burst of enthusiasm. “Exactly my opinion, sir. Home, for ever! Excuse the liberty, sir, I can't help it. Success to the Jolly Tapley! There's nothin' in the house they sha'n't have for the askin' for, except a bill. Home to be sure! Hurrah!”

Home they rolled accordingly, when he had got the old man in again, as fast as they could go; Mark abating nothing of his fervour by the way, but allowing it to vent itself as unrestrainedly as if he had been on Salisbury Plain.

And now the wedding party began to assemble at Todgers's. Mr. Jinkins, the only boarder invited, was on the ground first. He wore a white favour in his button-hole, and a bran new extra super double-milled blue saxonny dress coat (that was its description in the bill), with a variety of tortuous embellishments about the pockets, invented by the artist to do honour to the day. The miserable Augustus no longer felt strongly even on the subject of Jinkins. He hadn't strength of mind enough to do it. “Let him come!” he had said in answer to Miss Pecksniff, when she urged the point. “Let him come! He has ever been my rock ahead through life. 'Tis meet he should be there. Ha, ha! Oh, yes! let Jinkins come!”

Jinkins had come, with all the pleasure in life; and there he was. For some few minutes he had no companion but the breakfast, which was set forth in the drawing-room, with unusual taste and ceremony. But Mrs. Todgers soon joined him; and the bachelor cousin, the hairy young gentleman, and Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe, arrived in quick succession.

Mr. Spottletoe honoured Jinkins with an encouraging bow. "Glad to know you, sir," he said. "Give you joy!" Under the impression that Jinkins was the happy man.

Mr. Jinkins explained. He was merely doing the honours for his friend Moddle, who had ceased to reside in the house, and had not yet arrived.

"Not arrived, sir!" exclaimed Spottletoe in a great heat.

"Not yet," said Mr. Jinkins.

"Upon my soul!" cried Spottletoe. "He begins well! Upon my life and honour this young man begins well! But I should very much like to know how it is that every one who comes into contact with this family is guilty of some gross insult to it. Death! Not arrived yet. Not here to receive us!"

The nephew with the outline of a countenance, suggested that perhaps he had ordered a new pair of boots, and they hadn't come home.

"Don't talk to me of Boots, sir!" retorted Spottletoe, with immense indignation. "He is bound to come here in his slippers then; he is bound to come here barefoot. Don't offer such a wretched and evasive plea to me on behalf of your friend, as Boots, sir."

"He is not *my* friend," said the nephew. "I never saw him."

"Very well, sir," returned the fiery Spottletoe. "Then don't talk to me!"

The door was thrown open at this juncture, and Miss Pecksniff entered, tottering, and supported by her three bridesmaids. The strong-minded woman brought up the rear; having waited outside until now, for the purpose of spoiling the effect.

"How do you do, ma'am!" said Spottletoe to the strong-minded woman in a tone of defiance. "I believe you see Mrs. Spottletoe, ma'am."

The strong-minded woman, with an air of great interest in Mrs. Spottletoe's health, regretted that she was not more easily seen. Nature erring, in that lady's case, upon the slim side.

"Mrs. Spottletoe is at least more easily seen than the bridegroom, ma'am," returned that lady's husband. "That is, unless he has confined his attentions to any particular part or branch of this family, which would be quite in keeping with its usual proceedings."

"If you allude to me, sir——" the strong-minded woman began.

"Pray," interposed Miss Pecksniff, "do not allow Augustus, at this awful moment of his life and mine, to be the means of disturbing that

harmony which it is ever Augustus's and my wish to maintain. Augustus has not been introduced to any of my relations now present. He preferred not."

"Why, then, I venture to assert," cried Mr. Spottletoe, "that the man who aspires to join this family, and 'prefers not' to be introduced to its members, is an impertinent Puppy. That is my opinion of *him*!"

The strong-minded woman remarked with great suavity, that she was afraid he must be. Her three daughters observed aloud that it was "Shameful!"

"You do not know Augustus," said Miss Pecksniff, tearfully, "indeed you do not know him. Augustus is all mildness and humility. Wait till you see Augustus, and I am sure he will conciliate your affections."

"The question arises," said Spottletoe, folding his arms: "How long we are to wait. I am not accustomed to wait; that's the fact. And I want to know how long we are expected to wait."

"Mrs. Todgers!" said Charity, "Mr. Jinkins! I am afraid there must be some mistake. I think Augustus must have gone straight to the Altar!"

As such a thing was possible, and the church was close at hand, Mr. Jinkins ran off to see: accompanied by Mr. George Chuzzlewit the bachelor cousin, who preferred anything to the aggravation of sitting near the breakfast, without being able to eat it. But they came back with no other tidings than a familiar message from the clerk importing that if they wanted to be married that morning they had better look sharp: as the curate wasn't going to wait there all day.

The bride was now alarmed; seriously alarmed. Good Heavens, what could have happened! Augustus! Dear Augustus!

Mr. Jinkins volunteered to take a cab, and seek him at the newly furnished house. The strong-minded woman administered comfort to Miss Pecksniff. "It was a specimen of what she had to expect. It would do her good. It would dispel the romance of the affair." The red-nosed daughters also administered the kindest comfort. "Perhaps he'd come," they said. The sketchy nephew hinted that he might have fallen off a bridge. The wrath of Mr. Spottletoe resisted all the entreaties of his wife. Everybody spoke at once, and Miss Pecksniff, with clasped hands, sought consolation everywhere and found it nowhere, when Jinkins, having met the postman at the door, came back with a letter: which he put into her hand.

Miss Pecksniff opened it; glanced at it; uttered a piercing shriek; threw it down upon the ground; and fainted away.

They picked it up; and crowding round, and looking over one another's shoulders, read, in the words and dashes following, this communication:

“OFF GRAVESEND.
“CLIPPER SCHOONER, CUPID.
“*Wednesday night.*

“EVER INJURED MISS PECKSNIFF,

“Ere this reaches you, the undersigned will be—if not a corpse—on the way to Van Diemen's Land. Send not in pursuit. I never will be taken alive!

“The burden—300 tons per register—forgive, if in my distraction, I allude to the ship—on my mind—has been truly dreadful. Frequently—when you have sought to soothe my brow with kisses—has self-destruction flashed across me. Frequently—incredible as it may seem—have I abandoned the idea.

“I love another. She is Another's. Everything appears to be somebody else's. Nothing in the world is mine—not even my Situation—which I have forfeited—by my rash conduct—in running away.

“If you ever loved me, hear my last appeal! The last appeal of a miserable and blighted exile. Forward the inclosed—it is the key of my desk—to the office—by hand. Please address to Bobbs and Cholberry—I mean to Chobbs and Bolberry—but my mind is totally unhinged. I left a penknife—with a buckhorn handle—in your work-box. It will repay the messenger. May it make him happier than ever it did me!

“Oh, Miss Pecksniff, why didn't you leave me alone! Was it not cruel, *cruel!* Oh, my goodness, have you not been a witness of my feelings—have you not seen them flowing from my eyes—did you not, yourself, reproach me with weeping more than usual on that dreadful night when last we met—in that house—where I once was peaceful—though blighted—in the society of Mrs. Todgers!

“But it was written—in the Talmud—that you should involve yourself in the inscrutable and gloomy Fate which it is my mission to accomplish, and which wreathes itself—e'en now—about my—temples. I will not reproach, for I have wronged you. May the Furniture make some amends!

“Farewell! Be the proud bride of a ducal coronet, and forget me! Long may it be before you know the anguish with which I now sub-

scribe myself—amid the tempestuous howlings of the—sailors,

“Unalterably,

“Never yours,

“AUGUSTUS.”

They thought as little of Miss Pecksniff, while they greedily perused this letter, as if she were the very last person on earth whom it concerned. But Miss Pecksniff really had fainted away. The bitterness of her mortification; the bitterness of having summoned witnesses, and such witnesses to behold it; the bitterness of knowing that the strong-minded woman and the red-nosed daughters towered triumphant in this hour of their anticipated overthrow; was too much to be borne. Miss Pecksniff had fainted away in earnest.

What sounds are these that fall so grandly on the ear! What darkening room is this!

And that mild figure seated at an organ, who is he? Ah Tom, dear Tom, old friend!

Thy head is prematurely grey, though Time has passed between thee and our old association, Tom. But, in those sounds with which it is thy wont to bear the twilight company, the music of thy heart speaks out—the story of thy life relates itself.

Thy life is tranquil, calm, and happy, Tom. In the soft strain which ever and again comes stealing back upon the ear, the memory of thine old love may find a voice perhaps; but it is a pleasant, softened, whispering memory, like that in which we sometimes hold the dead, and does not pain or grieve thee, God be thanked!

Touch the notes lightly, Tom, as lightly as thou wilt, but never will thine hand fall half so lightly on that Instrument as on the head of thine old tyrant brought down very, very low; and never will it make as hollow a response to any touch of thine, as he does always.

For a drunken, begging, squalid, letter-writing man, called Pecksniff: with a shrewish daughter: haunts thee, Tom; and when he makes appeals to thee for cash, reminds thee that he built thy fortunes better than his own; and when he spends it, entertains the alehouse company with tales of thine ingratitude and his munificence towards thee once upon a time; and then he shows his elbows worn in holes, and puts his soleless shoes up, on a bench, and begs his auditors look there, while thou art comfortably housed and clothed. All known to thee, and yet all borne with, Tom!

So, with a smile upon thy face, thou passest gently to another measure—to a quicker and

more joyful one—and little feet are used to dance about thee at the sound, and bright young eyes to glance up into thine. And there is one slight creature, Tom—her child; not Ruth's—whom thine eyes follow in the romp and dance: who, wondering sometimes to see thee look so thoughtful, runs to climb up on thy knee, and put her cheek to thine: who loves thee, Tom,

above the rest, if that can be: and falling sick once, chose thee for her nurse, and never knew impatience, Tom, when Thou wert by her side.

Thou glidest now, into a graver air: an air devoted to old friends and bygone times; and in thy lingering touch upon the keys, and the rich swelling of the mellow harmony, they rise



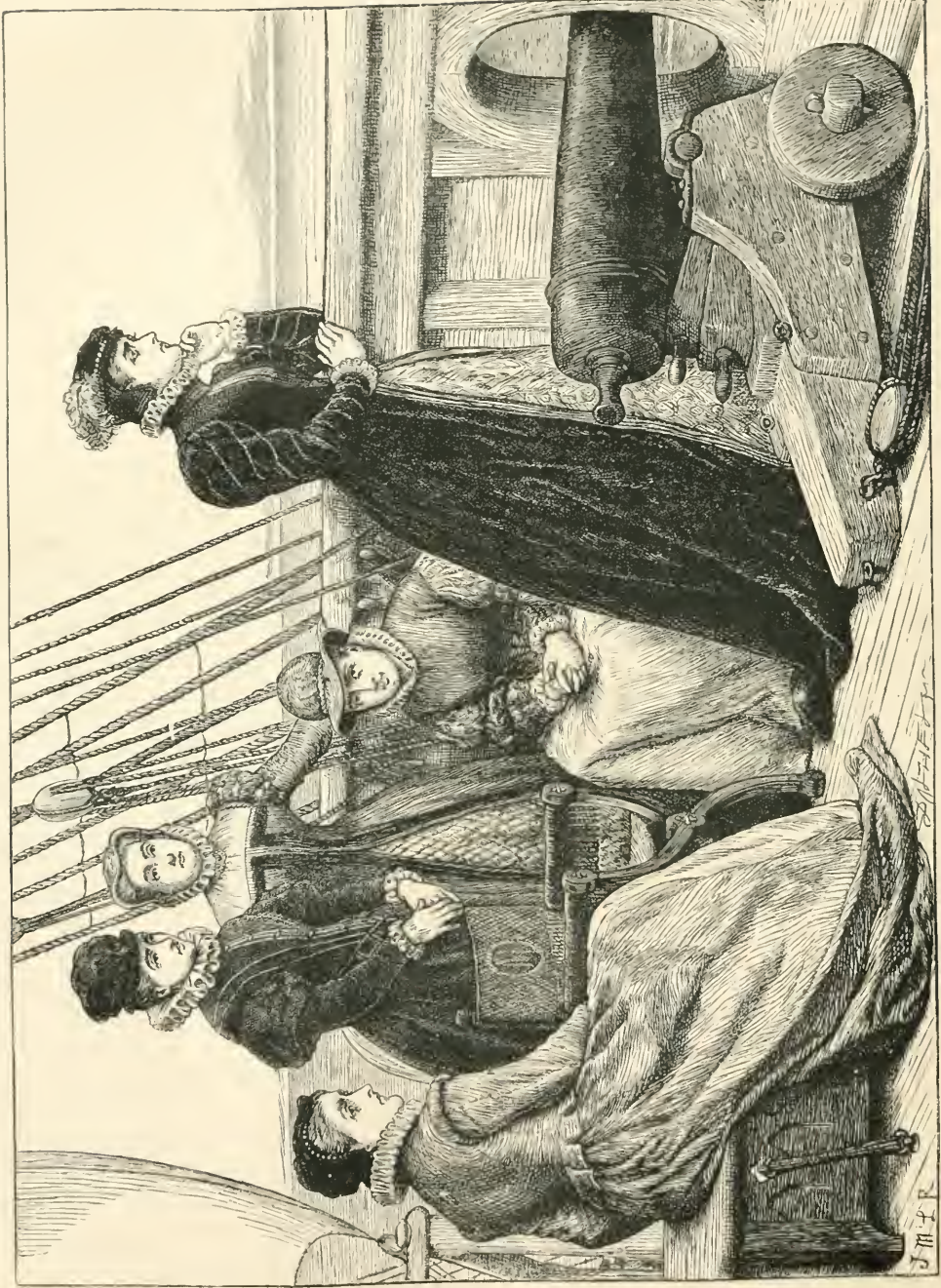
TOM'S REVERIE.

before thee. The spirit of that old man dead, who delighted to anticipate thy wants, and never ceased to honour thee, is there, among the rest: repeating with a face composed and calm, the words he said to thee upon his bed, and blessing thee!

And coming from a garden, Tom, bestrewn with flowers by children's hands, thy sister little

Ruth, as light of foot and heart as in old days, sits down beside thee. From the Present, and the Past, with which she is so tenderly entwined in all thy thoughts, thy strain soars onward to the Future. As it resounds, within thee and without, the noble music, rolling round ye both, shuts out the grosser prospect of an earthly parting, and uplifts ye both to Heaven!

THE END.



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS LEAVING FRANCE.

A

CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY

CHARLES DICKENS



WITH FIFTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. M^cL. RALSTON.

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193 PICCADILLY

TABLE OF THE REIGNS.

BEGINNING WITH KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

THE SAXONS.

| | | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of Alfred the Great | began in 871 . | ended in 901 . | and lasted 30 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Elder | began in 901 . | ended in 925 . | and lasted 24 years. |
| The Reign of Athelstan | began in 925 . | ended in 941 . | and lasted 16 years. |
| The Reigns of the Six Boy-Kings | began in 941 . | ended in 1016 . | and lasted 75 years. |

THE DANES, AND THE RESTORED SAXONS.

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of Canute | began in 1016 . | ended in 1035 . | and lasted 19 years. |
| The Reign of Harold Harefoot | began in 1035 . | ended in 1040 . | and lasted 5 years. |
| The Reign of Hardicanute | began in 1040 . | ended in 1042 . | and lasted 2 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Confessor | began in 1042 . | ended in 1066 . | and lasted 24 years. |

The Reign of Harold the Second, and the Norman Conquest, were also within the year 1066.

THE NORMANS.

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of William the First, called the Conqueror | began in 1066 . | ended in 1087 . | and lasted 21 years. |
| The Reign of William the Second, called Rufus | began in 1087 . | ended in 1100 . | and lasted 13 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the First, called Fine-Scholar | began in 1100 . | ended in 1135 . | and lasted 35 years. |
| The Reigns of Matilda and Stephen | began in 1135 . | ended in 1154 . | and lasted 19 years. |

THE PLANTAGENETS.

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| The Reign of Henry the Second | began in 1154 . | ended in 1189 . | and lasted 35 years. |
| The Reign of Richard the First, called the Lion-Heart | began in 1189 . | ended in 1199 . | and lasted 10 years. |
| The Reign of John, called Lackland | began in 1199 . | ended in 1216 . | and lasted 17 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the Third | began in 1216 . | ended in 1272 . | and lasted 56 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the First, called Longshanks | began in 1272 . | ended in 1307 . | and lasted 35 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Second | began in 1307 . | ended in 1327 . | and lasted 20 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Third | began in 1327 . | ended in 1377 . | and lasted 50 years. |
| The Reign of Richard the Second | began in 1377 . | ended in 1399 . | and lasted 22 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the Fourth, called Bolingbroke | began in 1399 . | ended in 1413 . | and lasted 14 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the Fifth | began in 1413 . | ended in 1422 . | and lasted 9 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the Sixth | began in 1422 . | ended in 1461 . | and lasted 39 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Fourth | began in 1461 . | ended in 1483 . | and lasted 22 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Fifth | began in 1483 . | ended in 1483 . | and lasted a few weeks. |
| The Reign of Richard the Third | began in 1483 . | ended in 1485 . | and lasted 2 years. |

THE TUDORS.

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of Henry the Seventh | began in 1485 . | ended in 1509 . | and lasted 24 years. |
| The Reign of Henry the Eighth | began in 1509 . | ended in 1547 . | and lasted 38 years. |
| The Reign of Edward the Sixth | began in 1547 . | ended in 1553 . | and lasted 6 years. |
| The Reign of Mary | began in 1553 . | ended in 1558 . | and lasted 5 years. |
| The Reign of Elizabeth | began in 1558 . | ended in 1603 . | and lasted 45 years. |

THE STUARTS.

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of James the First | began in 1603 . | ended in 1625 . | and lasted 22 years. |
| The Reign of Charles the First | began in 1625 . | ended in 1649 . | and lasted 24 years. |

THE COMMONWEALTH.

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| The Council of State and Government by Parliament | began in 1649 | ended in 1653 | and lasted 4 years. |
| The Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell | began in 1653 | ended in 1658 | and lasted 5 years. |
| The Protectorate of Richard Cromwell | began in 1658 | ended in 1659 | and lasted 7 months. |
| The Council of State, and Government by Parliament | resumed in 1659 | ended in 1660 | and lasted 13 months. |

THE STUARTS RESTORED.

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of Charles the Second | began in 1660 | ended in 1685 | and lasted 25 years. |
| The Reign of James the Second | began in 1685 | ended in 1688 | and lasted 3 years. |

THE REVOLUTION.—1688. (Comprised in the concluding chapter.)

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| The Reign of William III. and Mary II. | began in 1689 | ended in 1695 | and lasted 6 years. |
| The Reign of William III. | | ended in 1702 | and lasted 13 years. |
| The Reign of Anne | began in 1702 | ended in 1714 | and lasted 12 years. |
| The Reign of George the First | began in 1714 | ended in 1727 | and lasted 13 years. |
| The Reign of George the Second | began in 1727 | ended in 1760 | and lasted 33 years. |
| The Reign of George the Third | began in 1760 | ended in 1820 | and lasted 60 years. |
| The Reign of George the Fourth | began in 1820 | ended in 1830 | and lasted 10 years. |
| The Reign of William the Fourth | began in 1830 | ended in 1837 | and lasted 7 years. |
| The Reign of Victoria | began in 1837 | | |

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THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND THE DANES.

A CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT ENGLAND AND THE ROMANS.

IF you look at a Map of the World, you will see, in the left-hand upper corner of the Eastern Hemisphere, two Islands lying in the sea. They are England and Scotland, and Ireland. CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND, I.

land. England and Scotland form the greater part of these Islands. Ireland is the next in size. The little neighbouring islands, which are so small upon the Map as to be mere dots, are chiefly little bits of Scotland—broken off, I dare say, in the course of a great length of time, by the power of the restless water.

In the old-days, a long, long while ago, before

Our Saviour was born on earth and lay asleep in a manger, these Islands were in the same place, and the stormy sea roared round them, just as it roars now. But the sea was not alive, then, with great ships and brave sailors, sailing to and from all parts of the world. It was very lonely. The Islands lay solitary, in the great expanse of water. The foaming waves dashed against their cliffs, and the bleak winds blew over their forests; but the winds and waves brought no adventurers to land upon the Islands, and the savage Islanders knew nothing of the rest of the world, and the rest of the world knew nothing of them.

It is supposed that the Phœnicians, who were an ancient people, famous for carrying on trade, came in ships to these Islands, and found that they produced tin and lead; both very useful things, as you know, and both produced to this very hour upon the sea-coast. The most celebrated tin mines in Cornwall are, still, close to the sea. One of them, which I have seen, is so close to it that it is hollowed out underneath the ocean; and the miners say, that in stormy weather, when they are at work down in that deep place, they can hear the noise of the waves thundering above their heads. So, the Phœnicians, coasting about the Islands, would come, without much difficulty, to where the tin and lead were.

The Phœnicians traded with the Islanders for these metals, and gave the Islanders some other useful things in exchange. The Islanders were, at first, poor savages, going almost naked, or only dressed in the rough skins of beasts, and staining their bodies, as other savages do, with coloured earths and the juices of plants. But the Phœnicians, sailing over to the opposite coasts of France and Belgium, and saying to the people there, "We have been to those white cliffs across the water, which you can see in fine weather, and from that country, which is called BRITAIN, we bring this tin and lead," tempted some of the French and Belgians to come over also. These people settled themselves on the south coast of England, which is now called Kent; and, although they were a rough people too, they taught the savage Britons some useful arts, and improved that part of the Islands. It is probable that other people came over from Spain to Ireland, and settled there.

Thus, by little and little, strangers became mixed with the Islanders, and the savage Britons grew into a wild bold people; almost savage, still, especially in the interior of the country away from the sea where the foreign settlers seldom went; but hardy, brave, and strong.

The whole country was covered with forests, and swamps. The greater part of it was very misty and cold. There were no roads, no bridges, no streets, no houses that you would think deserving of the name. A town was nothing but a collection of straw-covered huts, hidden in a thick wood, with a ditch all round, and a low wall, made of mud, or the trunks of trees placed one upon another. The people planted little or no corn, but lived upon the flesh of their flocks and cattle. They made no coins, but used metal rings for money. They were clever in basket-work, as savage people often are; and they could make a coarse kind of cloth, and some very bad earthenware. But in building fortresses they were much more clever.

They made boats of basket-work, covered with the skins of animals, but seldom, if ever, ventured far from the shore. They made swords, of copper mixed with tin; but, these swords were of an awkward shape, and so soft that a heavy blow would bend one. They made light shields, short pointed daggers, and spears—which they jerked back after they had thrown them at an enemy, by a long strip of leather fastened to the stem. The butt-end was a rattle, to frighten an enemy's horse. The ancient Britons, being divided into as many as thirty or forty tribes, each commanded by its own little king, were constantly fighting with one another, as savage people usually do; and they always fought with these weapons.

They were very fond of horses. The standard of Kent was the picture of a white horse. They could break them in and manage them wonderfully well. Indeed, the horses (of which they had an abundance, though they were rather small) were so well taught in those days, that they can scarcely be said to have improved since; though the men are so much wiser. They understood, and obeyed, every word of command; and would stand still by themselves, in all the din and noise of battle, while their masters went to fight on foot. The Britons could not have succeeded in their most remarkable art, without the aid of these sensible and trusty animals. The art I mean, is the construction and management of war-chariots or cars, for which they have ever been celebrated in history. Each of the best sort of these chariots, not quite breast high in front, and open at the back, contained one man to drive, and two or three others to fight—all standing up. The horses who drew them were so well trained, that they would tear, at full gallop, over the most stony ways, and even

through the woods; dashing down their masters' enemies beneath their hoofs, and cutting them to pieces with the blades of swords, or scythes, which were fastened to the wheels, and stretched out beyond the car on each side, for that cruel purpose. In a moment, while at full speed, the horses would stop, at the driver's command. The men within would leap out, deal blows about them with their swords like hail, leap on the horses, on the pole, spring back into the chariots anyhow; and, as soon as they were safe, the horses tore away again.

The Britons had a strange and terrible religion, called the Religion of the Druids. It seems to have been brought over, in very early times indeed, from the opposite country of France, anciently called Gaul, and to have mixed up the worship of the Serpent, and of the Sun and Moon, with the worship of some of the Heathen Gods and Goddesses. Most of its ceremonies were kept secret by the priests, the Druids, who pretended to be enchanters, and who carried magicians' wands, and wore, each of them, about his neck, what he told the ignorant people was a Serpent's egg in a golden case. But it is certain that the Druidical ceremonies included the sacrifice of human victims, the torture of some suspected criminals, and, on particular occasions, even the burning alive, in immense wicker cages, of a number of men and animals together. The Druid Priests had some kind of veneration for the Oak, and for the mistletoe—the same plant that we hang up in houses at Christmas Time now—when its white berries grew upon the Oak. They met together in dark woods, which they called Sacred Groves; and there they instructed, in their mysterious arts, young men who came to them as pupils, and who sometimes stayed with them as long as twenty years.

These Druids built great Temples and altars, open to the sky, fragments of some of which are yet remaining. Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, in Wiltshire, is the most extraordinary of these. Three curious stones, called Kits Coty House, on Bluebell Hill, near Maidstone, in Kent, form another. We know, from examination of the great blocks of which such buildings are made, that they could not have been raised without the aid of some ingenious machines, which are common now, but which the ancient Britons certainly did not use in making their own uncomfortable houses. I should not wonder if the Druids, and their pupils who stayed with them twenty years, knowing more than the rest of the Britons, kept the people out of sight while they made these buildings, and then pre-

tended that they built them by magic. Perhaps they had a hand in the fortresses too; at all events, as they were very powerful, and very much believed in, and as they made and executed the laws, and paid no taxes, I don't wonder that they liked their trade. And, as they persuaded the people the more Druids there were, the better off the people would be, I don't wonder that there were a good many of them. But it is pleasant to think that there are no Druids, *now*, who go on in that way, and pretend to carry Enchanters' Wands and Serpents' Eggs—and of course there is nothing of the kind, anywhere.

Such was the improved condition of the ancient Britons, fifty-five years before the birth of Our Saviour, when the Romans, under their great General, Julius Cæsar, were masters of all the rest of the known world. Julius Cæsar had then just conquered Gaul; and hearing, in Gaul, a good deal about the opposite Island with the white cliffs, and about the bravery of the Britons who inhabited it—some of whom had been fetched over to help the Gauls in the war against him—he resolved, as he was so near, to come and conquer Britain next.

So, Julius Cæsar came sailing over to this Island of ours, with eighty vessels and twelve thousand men. And he came from the French coast between Calais and Boulogne, "because thence was the shortest passage into Britain;" just for the same reason as our steam-boats now take the same track, every day. He expected to conquer Britain easily: but it was not such easy work as he supposed—for the bold Britons fought most bravely; and, what with not having his horse-soldiers with him (for they had been driven back by a storm), and what with having some of his vessels dashed to pieces by a high tide after they were drawn ashore, he ran great risk of being totally defeated. However, for once that the bold Britons beat him, he beat them twice; though not so soundly but that he was very glad to accept their proposals of peace, and go away.

But, in the spring of the next year, he came back; this time, with eight hundred vessels and thirty thousand men. The British tribes chose, as their general-in-chief, a Briton, whom the Romans in their Latin language called CASSIVELLAUNUS, but whose British name is supposed to have been CASWALLON. A brave general he was, and well he and his soldiers fought the Roman army! So well, that whenever in that war the Roman soldiers saw a great cloud of dust, and heard the rattle of the rapid British chariots, they trembled in their hearts. Besides

a number of smaller battles, there was a battle fought near Canterbury, in Kent; there was a battle fought near Chertsey, in Surrey; there was a battle fought near a marshy little town in a wood, the capital of that part of Britain which belonged to CASSIVELLAUNUS, and which was probably near what is now Saint Albans, in Hertfordshire. However, brave CASSIVELLAUNUS had the worst of it, on the whole; though he and his men always fought like lions. As the other British chiefs were jealous of him, and were always quarrelling with him, and with one another, he gave up, and proposed peace. Julius Cæsar was very glad to grant peace easily, and to go away again with all his remaining ships and men. He had expected to find pearls in Britain, and he may have found a few for anything I know; but, at all events, he found delicious oysters, and I am sure he found tough Britons—of whom, I dare say, he made the same complaint as Napoleon Bonaparte the great French General did, eighteen hundred years afterwards, when he said they were such unreasonable fellows that they never knew when they were beaten. They never *did* know, I believe, and never will.

Nearly a hundred years passed on, and all that time, there was peace in Britain. The Britons improved their towns and mode of life: became more civilised, travelled, and learnt a great deal from the Gauls and Romans. At last, the Roman Emperor, Claudius, sent AULUS PLAURIUS, a skilful general, with a mighty force, to subdue the Island, and shortly afterwards arrived himself. They did little; and OSTORIUS SCAPULA, another general, came. Some of the British Chiefs of Tribes submitted. Others resolved to fight to the death. Of these brave men, the bravest was CARACTACUS, or CARADOC, who gave battle to the Romans, with his army, among the mountains of North Wales. "This day," said he to his soldiers, "decides the fate of Britain! Your liberty, or your eternal slavery, dates from this hour. Remember your brave ancestors, who drove the great Cæsar himself across the sea!" On hearing these words, his men, with a great shout, rushed upon the Romans. But the strong Roman swords and armour were too much for the weaker British weapons in close conflict. The Britons lost the day. The wife and daughter of the brave CARACTACUS were taken prisoners; his brothers delivered themselves up; he himself was betrayed into the hands of the Romans by his false and base step-mother; and they carried him, and all his family, in triumph to Rome.

But a great man will be great in misfortune,

great in prison, great in chains. His noble air, and dignified endurance of distress, so touched the Roman people who thronged the streets to see him, that he and his family were restored to freedom. No one knows whether his great heart broke, and he died in Rome, or whether he ever returned to his own dear country. English oaks have grown up from acorns, and withered away, when they were hundreds of years old—and other oaks have sprung up in their places, and died too, very aged—since the rest of the history of the brave CARACTACUS was forgotten.

Still, the Britons *would not* yield. They rose again and again, and died by thousands, sword in hand. They rose, on every possible occasion. SÜETONIUS, another Roman general, came, and stormed the Island of Anglesey (then called MONA), which was supposed to be sacred, and he burnt the Druids in their own wicker cages, by their own fires. But, even while he was in Britain, with his victorious troops, the BRITONS rose. Because BOADICEA, a British queen, the widow of the King of the Norfolk and Suffolk people, resisted the plundering of her property by the Romans who were settled in England, she was scourged, by order of CATUS a Roman officer; and her two daughters were shamefully insulted in her presence, and her husband's relations were made slaves. To avenge this injury, the Britons rose, with all their might and rage. They drove CATUS into Gaul; they laid the Roman possessions waste; they forced the Romans out of London, then a poor little town, but a trading place; they hanged, burnt, crucified, and slew by the sword, seventy thousand Romans in a few days. SÜETONIUS strengthened his army, and advanced to give them battle. They strengthened their army, and desperately attacked his, on the field where it was strongly posted. Before the first charge of the Britons was made, BOADICEA, in a war-chariot, with her fair hair streaming in the wind, and her injured daughters lying at her feet, drove among the troops, and cried to them for vengeance on their oppressors, the licentious Romans. The Britons fought to the last; but they were vanquished with great slaughter, and the unhappy queen took poison.

Still, the spirit of the Britons was not broken. When SÜETONIUS left the country, they fell upon his troops, and retook the Island of Anglesey. AGRICOLA came, fifteen or twenty years afterwards, and retook it once more, and devoted seven years to subduing the country, especially that part of it which is now called SCOTLAND; but, its people, the Caledonians,

resisted him at every inch of ground. They fought the bloodiest battles with him; they killed their very wives and children, to prevent his making prisoners of them; they fell, fighting, in such great numbers that certain hills in Scotland are yet supposed to be vast heaps of stones piled up above their graves. HADRIAN came, thirty years afterwards, and still they resisted him. SEVERUS came, nearly a hundred years afterwards, and they worried his great army like dogs, and rejoiced to see them die, by thousands, in the bogs and swamps. CARACALLA, the son and successor of SEVERUS, did the most to conquer them, for a time; but not by force of arms. He knew how little that would do. He yielded up a quantity of land to the Caledonians, and gave the Britons the same privileges as the Romans possessed. There was peace, after this, for seventy years.

Then new enemies arose. They were the SAXONS, a fierce, seafaring people from the countries to the North of the Rhine, the great river of Germany on the banks of which the best grapes grow to make the German wine. They began to come, in pirate ships, to the sea-coast of Gaul and Britain, and to plunder them. They were repulsed by CARAUSIUS, a native either of Belgium or of Britain, who was appointed by the Romans to the command, and under whom the Britons first began to fight upon the sea. But, after this time, they renewed their ravages. A few years more, and the Scots (which was then the name for the people of Ireland), and the Picts, a northern people, began to make frequent plundering incursions into the South of Britain. All these attacks were repeated, at intervals, during two hundred years, and through a long succession of Roman Emperors and chiefs; during all which length of time, the Britons rose against the Romans, over and over again. At last, in the days of the Roman HONORIUS, when the Roman power all over the world was fast declining, and when Rome wanted all her soldiers at home, the Romans abandoned all hope of conquering Britain, and went away. And still, at last, as at first, the Britons rose against them, in their old brave manner; for, a very little while before, they had turned away the Roman magistrates, and declared themselves an independent people.

Five hundred years had passed, since Julius Cæsar's first invasion of the Island, when the Romans departed from it for ever. In the course of that time, although they had been the cause of terrible fighting and bloodshed, they had done much to improve the condition of the

Britons. They had made great military roads; they had built forts; they had taught them how to dress, and arm themselves, much better than they had ever known how to do before; they had refined the whole British way of living. AGRICOLA had built a great wall of earth, more than seventy miles long, extending from Newcastle to beyond Carlisle, for the purpose of keeping out the Picts and Scots; HADRIAN had strengthened it; SEVERUS, finding it much in want of repair, had built it afresh of stone. Above all, it was in the Roman time, and by means of Roman ships, that the Christian Religion was first brought into Britain, and its people first taught the great lesson that, to be good in the sight of GOD, they must love their neighbours as themselves, and do unto others as they would be done by. The Druids declared that it was very wicked to believe in any such thing, and cursed all the people who did believe it very heartily. But, when the people found that they were none the better for the blessings of the Druids, and none the worse for the curses of the Druids, but, that the sun shone and the rain fell without consulting the Druids at all, they just began to think that the Druids were mere men, and that it signified very little whether they cursed or blessed. After which, the pupils of the Druids fell off greatly in numbers, and the Druids took to other trades.

Thus I have come to the end of the Roman time in England. It is but little that is known of those five hundred years; but some remains of them are still found. Often, when labourers are digging up the ground, to make foundations for houses or churches, they light on rusty money that once belonged to the Romans. Fragments of plates from which they ate, of goblets from which they drank, and of pavement on which they trod, are discovered among the earth that is broken by the plough, or the dust that is crumbled by the gardener's spade. Wells that the Romans sunk, still yield water; roads that the Romans made, form part of our highways. In some old battle-fields, British spear-heads and Roman armour have been found, mingled together in decay, as they fell in the thick pressure of the fight. Traces of Roman camps overgrown with grass, and of mounds that are the burial-places of heaps of Britons, are to be seen in almost all parts of the country. Across the bleak moors of Northumberland, the wall of SEVERUS, overrun with moss and weeds, still stretches, a strong ruin; and the shepherds and their dogs lie sleeping on it in the summer weather. On Salisbury Plain, Stonehenge yet stands: a monument of the earlier time when

the Roman name was unknown in Britain, and when the Druids, with their best magic wands, could not have written it in the sands of the wild sea-shore.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT ENGLAND UNDER THE EARLY SAXONS.

THE Romans had scarcely gone away from Britain, when the Britons began to wish they had never left it. For, the Roman soldiers being gone, and the Britons being much reduced in numbers by their long wars, the Picts and Scots came pouring in, over the broken and unguarded wall of SEVERUS, in swarms. They plundered the richest towns, and killed the people; and came back so often for more booty and more slaughter, that the unfortunate Britons lived a life of terror. As if the Picts and Scots were not bad enough on land, the Saxons attacked the islanders by sea; and, as if something more were still wanting to make them miserable, they quarrelled bitterly among themselves as to what prayers they ought to say, and how they ought to say them. The priests, being very angry with one another on these questions, cursed one another in the heartiest manner; and (uncommonly like the old Druids) cursed all the people whom they could not persuade. So, altogether, the Britons were very badly off, you may believe.

They were in such distress, in short, that they sent a letter to Rome entreating help—which they called the Groans of the Britons; and in which they said, "The barbarians chase us into the sea, the sea throws us back upon the barbarians, and we have only the hard choice left us of perishing by the sword, or perishing by the waves." But, the Romans could not help them, even if they were so inclined; for they had enough to do to defend themselves against their own enemies, who were then very fierce and strong. At last, the Britons, unable to bear their hard condition any longer, resolved to make peace with the Saxons, and to invite the Saxons to come into their country, and help them to keep out the Picts and Scots.

It was a British Prince named VORTIGERN who took this resolution, and who made a treaty of friendship with HENGIST and HORSA, two Saxon chiefs. Both of these names, in the old Saxon language, signify Horse; for the Saxons, like many other nations in a rough state, were fond of giving men the names of animals, as Horse,

Wolf, Bear, Hound. The Indians of North America,—a very inferior people to the Saxons, though—do the same to this day.

HENGIST and HORSA drove out the Picts and Scots; and VORTIGERN, being grateful to them for that service, made no opposition to their settling themselves in that part of England which is called the Isle of Thanet, or to their inviting over more of their countrymen to join them. But HENGIST had a beautiful daughter named ROWENA; and when, at a feast, she filled a golden goblet to the brim with wine, and gave it to VORTIGERN, saying in a sweet voice, "Dear King, thy health!" the King fell in love with her. My opinion is, that the cunning HENGIST meant him to do so, in order that the Saxons might have greater influence with him; and that the fair ROWENA came to that feast, golden goblet and all, on purpose.

At any rate, they were married; and, long afterwards, whenever the King was angry with the Saxons, or jealous of their encroachments, ROWENA would put her beautiful arms round his neck, and softly say, "Dear King, they are my people! Be favourable to them, as you loved that Saxon girl who gave you the golden goblet of wine at the feast!" And, really, I don't see how the King could help himself.

Ah! We must all die! In the course of years, VORTIGERN died—he was dethroned, and put in prison, first, I am afraid; and ROWENA died; and generations of Saxons and Britons died; and events that happened during a long, long time, would have been quite forgotten but for the tales and songs of the old Bards, who used to go about from feast to feast, with their white beards, recounting the deeds of their forefathers. Among the histories of which they sang and talked, there was a famous one, concerning the bravery and virtues of KING ARTHUR, supposed to have been a British Prince in those old times. But, whether such a person really lived, or whether there were several persons whose histories came to be confused together under that one name, or whether all about him was invention, no one knows.

I will tell you, shortly, what is most interesting in the early Saxon times, as they are described in these songs and stories of the Bards.

In, and long after, the days of VORTIGERN, fresh bodies of Saxons, under various chiefs, came pouring into Britain. One body, conquering the Britons in the East, and settling there, called their kingdom Essex; another body settled in the West, and called their kingdom Wessex; the Northfolk, or Norfolk people, established themselves in one place; the Southfolk, or

Suffolk people, established themselves in another; and gradually seven kingdoms or states arose in England, which were called the Saxon Heptarchy. The poor Britons, falling back before these crowds of fighting men whom they had innocently invited over as friends, retired into Wales and the adjacent country; into Devonshire, and into Cornwall. Those parts of England long remained unconquered. And in Cornwall now—where the sea-coast is very gloomy, steep, and rugged—where, in the dark winter-time, ships have often been wrecked close to the land, and every soul on board has perished—where the winds and waves howl drearily, and split the solid rocks into arches and caverns—there are very ancient ruins, which the people call the ruins of KING ARTHUR'S Castle.

Kent is the most famous of the seven Saxon kingdoms, because the Christian religion was preached to the Saxons there (who domineered over the Britons too much, to care for what *they* said about their religion, or anything else) by AUGUSTINE, a monk from Rome. KING ETHELBERT, of Kent, was soon converted; and the moment he said he was a Christian, his courtiers all said *they* were Christians; after which, ten thousand of his subjects said they were Christians too. AUGUSTINE built a little church, close to this King's palace, on the ground now occupied by the beautiful cathedral of Canterbury. SEBERT, the King's nephew, built on a muddy marshy place near London, where there had been a temple to Apollo, a church dedicated to Saint Peter, which is now Westminster Abbey. And, in London itself, on the foundation of a temple to Diana, he built another little church, which has risen up, since that old time, to be Saint Paul's.

After the death of ETHELBERT, EDWIN, King of Northumbria, who was such a good king that it was said a woman or child might openly carry a purse of gold, in his reign, without fear, allowed his child to be baptised, and held a great council to consider whether he and his people should all be Christians or not. It was decided that they should be. COIFI, the chief priest of the old religion, made a great speech on the occasion. In this discourse, he told the people that he had found out the old gods to be impostors. "I am quite satisfied of it," he said. "Look at me! I have been serving them all my life, and they have done nothing for me; whereas, if they had been really powerful, they could not have decently done less, in return for all I have done for them, than make my fortune. As they have never made my fortune, I am quite convinced they

are impostors!" When this singular priest had finished speaking, he hastily armed himself with sword and lance, mounted a war-horse, rode at a furious gallop in sight of all the people to the temple, and flung his lance against it as an insult. From that time, the Christian religion spread itself among the Saxons, and became their faith.

The next very famous prince was EGBERT. He lived about a hundred and fifty years afterwards, and claimed to have a better right to the throne of Wessex than BEORTRIC, another Saxon prince who was at the head of that kingdom, and who married EDBURGA, the daughter of OFFA, king of another of the seven kingdoms. This QUEEN EDBURGA was a handsome murderess, who poisoned people when they offended her. One day, she mixed a cup of poison for a certain noble belonging to the court; but her husband drank of it too, by mistake, and died. Upon this, the people revolted, in great crowds; and running to the palace, and thundering at the gates, cried, "Down with the wicked queen, who poisons men!" They drove her out of the country, and abolished the title she had disgraced. When years had passed away, some travellers came home from Italy, and said that in the town of Pavia they had seen a ragged beggar-woman, who had once been handsome, but was then shrivelled, bent, and yellow, wandering about the streets, crying for bread; and that this beggar-woman was the poisoning English queen. It was, indeed, EDBURGA; and so she died, without a shelter for her wretched head.

EGBERT, not considering himself safe in England, in consequence of his having claimed the crown of Wessex (for he thought his rival might take him prisoner and put him to death), sought refuge at the court of CHARLEMAGNE, King of France. On the death of BEORTRIC, so unhappily poisoned by mistake, EGBERT came back to Britain; succeeded to the throne of Wessex; conquered some of the other monarchs of the seven kingdoms; added their territories to his own; and, for the first time, called the country over which he ruled, ENGLAND.

And now, new enemies arose, who, for a long time, troubled England sorely. These were the Northmen, the people of Denmark and Norway, whom the English called the Danes. They were a warlike people, quite at home upon the sea; not Christians; very daring and cruel. They came over in ships, and plundered and burned wheresoever they landed. Once, they beat EGBERT in battle. Once, EGBERT beat them. But, they cared no more for being beaten than

the English themselves. In the four following short reigns, of **ETHELWULF**, and his sons, **ETHELBALD**, **ETHELBERT**, and **ETHELRED**, they came back, over and over again, burning and plundering, and laying England waste. In the last-mentioned reign, they seized **EDMUND**, King of East England, and bound him to a tree. Then, they proposed to him that he should change his religion; but he, being a good Christian, steadily refused. Upon that, they beat him, made cowardly jests upon him, all defenceless as he was, shot arrows at him, and, finally, struck off his head. It is impossible to say whose head they might have struck off next, but for the death of **KING ETHELRED** from a wound he had received in fighting against them, and the succession to his throne of the best and wisest king that ever lived in England.

CHAPTER III.

ENGLAND UNDER THE GOOD SAXON, ALFRED.

ALFRED THE GREAT was a young man, three-and-twenty years of age, when he became king. Twice in his childhood, he had been taken to Rome, where the Saxon nobles were in the habit of going on journeys which they supposed to be religious; and, once, he had stayed for some time in Paris. Learning, however, was so little cared for, then, that at twelve years old he had not been taught to read: although, of the sons of **KING ETHELWULF**, he, the youngest, was the favourite. But he had—as most men who grow up to be great and good are generally found to have had—an excellent mother; and, one day, this lady, whose name was **OSBURGA**, happened, as she was sitting among her sons, to read a book of Saxon poetry. The art of printing was not known until long and long after that period, and the book, which was written, was what is called “illuminated,” with beautiful bright letters, richly painted. The brothers admiring it very much, their mother said, “I will give it to that one of you four princes who first learns to read.” **ALFRED** sought out a tutor that very day, applied himself to learn with great diligence, and soon won the book. He was proud of it, all his life.

This great king, in the first year of his reign, fought nine battles with the Danes. He made some treaties with them too, by which the false Danes swore they would quit the country. They pretended to consider that they had taken a very

solemn oath, in swearing this upon the holy bracelets that they wore, and which were always buried with them when they died; but they cared little for it, for they thought nothing of breaking oaths and treaties too, as soon as it suited their purpose, and coming back again to fight, plunder, and burn, as usual. One fatal winter, in the fourth year of **KING ALFRED**'s reign, they spread themselves in great numbers over the whole of England; and so dispersed and routed the King's soldiers that the King was left alone, and was obliged to disguise himself as a common peasant, and to take refuge in the cottage of one of his cowherds who did not know his face.

Here, **KING ALFRED**, while the Danes sought him far and near, was left alone one day, by the cowherd's wife, to watch some cakes which she put to bake upon the hearth. But, being at work upon his bow and arrows, with which he hoped to punish the false Danes when a brighter time should come, and thinking deeply of his poor unhappy subjects whom the Danes chased through the land, his noble mind forgot the cakes, and they were burnt. “What!” said the cowherd's wife, who scolded him well when she came back, and little thought she was scolding the King, “you will be ready enough to eat them by-and-by, and yet you cannot watch them, idle dog?”

At length, the Devonshire men made head against a new host of Danes who landed on their coast; killed their chief, and captured their flag; on which was represented the likeness of a Raven—a very fit bird for a thievish army like that, I think. The loss of their standard troubled the Danes greatly, for they believed it to be enchanted—woven by the three daughters of one father in a single afternoon—and they had a story among themselves that when they were victorious in battle, the Raven stretched his wings and seemed to fly; and that when they were defeated, he would droop. He had good reason to droop, now, if he could have done anything half so sensible; for, **KING ALFRED** joined the Devonshire men; made a camp with them on a piece of firm ground in the midst of a bog in Somersetshire; and prepared for a great attempt for vengeance on the Danes, and the deliverance of his oppressed people.

But, first, as it was important to know how numerous those pestilent Danes were, and how they were fortified, **KING ALFRED**, being a good musician, disguised himself as a glee-man or minstrel, and went, with his harp, to the Danish camp. He played and sang in the very tent of **GUTHRUM** the Danish leader, and entertained

the Danes as they caroused. While he seemed to think of nothing but his music, he was watchful of their tents, their arms, their discipline, everything that he desired to know. And right soon did this great king entertain them to a different tune ; for, summoning all his true followers to meet him at an appointed place, where they received him with joyful shouts and tears, as the monarch whom many of them had given up for lost or dead, he put himself at their head, marched on the Danish camp, defeated the Danes with great slaughter, and besieged them for fourteen days to prevent their escape. But, being as merciful as he was good and brave, he then, instead of killing them, proposed peace : on condition that they should altogether depart from that Western part of England, and settle in the East ; and that GUTHRUM should become a Christian, in remembrance of the Divine religion which now taught his conqueror, the noble ALFRED, to forgive the enemy who had so often injured him. This, GUTHRUM did. At his baptism, KING ALFRED was his godfather. And GUTHRUM was an honourable chief who well deserved that clemency ; for, ever afterwards he was loyal and faithful to the king. The Danes under him were faithful too. They plundered and burned no more, but worked like honest men. They ploughed, and sowed, and reaped, and led good honest English lives. And I hope the children of those Danes played, many a time, with Saxon children in the sunny fields ; and that Danish young men fell in love with Saxon girls, and married them ; and that English travellers, benighted at the doors of Danish cottages, often went in for shelter until morning ; and that Danes and Saxons sat by the red fire, friends, talking of KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

All the Danes were not like these under GUTHRUM ; for, after some years, more of them came over, in the old plundering and burning way—among them a fierce pirate of the name of HASTINGS, who had the boldness to sail up the Thames to Gravesend, with eighty ships. For three years, there was a war with these Danes ; and there was a famine in the country, too, and a plague, both upon human creatures and beasts. But KING ALFRED, whose mighty heart never failed him, built large ships nevertheless, with which to pursue the pirates on the sea ; and he encouraged his soldiers, by his brave example, to fight valiantly against them on the shore. At last, he drove them all away ; and then there was repose in England.

As great and good in peace, as he was great and good in war, KING ALFRED never rested from his labours to improve his people. He

loved to talk with clever men, and with travellers from foreign countries, and to write down what they told him, for his people to read. He had studied Latin after learning to read English, and now another of his labours was, to translate Latin books into the English-Saxon tongue, that his people might be interested, and improved by their contents. He made just laws, that they might live more happily and freely ; he turned away all partial judges, that no wrong might be done them ; he was so careful of their property, and punished robbers so severely, that it was a common thing to say that under the great KING ALFRED, garlands of golden chains and jewels might have hung across the streets, and no man would have touched one. He founded schools ; he patiently heard causes himself in his Court of Justice ; the great desires of his heart were, to do right to all his subjects, and to leave England better, wiser, happier in all ways, than he found it. His industry in these efforts was quite astonishing. Every day he divided into certain portions, and in each portion devoted himself to a certain pursuit. That he might divide his time exactly, he had wax torches or candles made, which were all of the same size, were notched across at regular distances, and were always kept burning. Thus, as the candles burnt down, he divided the day into notches, almost as accurately as we now divide it into hours upon the clock. But when the candles were first invented, it was found that the wind and draughts of air, blowing into the palace through the doors and windows, and through the chinks in the walls, caused them to gutter and burn unequally. To prevent this, the King had them put into cases formed of wood and white horn. And these were the first lanthorns ever made in England.

All this time, he was afflicted with a terrible unknown disease, which caused him violent and frequent pain that nothing could relieve. He bore it, as he had borne all the troubles of his life, like a brave good man, until he was fifty-three years old ; and then, having reigned thirty years, he died. He died in the year nine hundred and one ; but, long ago as that is, his fame, and the love and gratitude with which his subjects regarded him, are freshly remembered to the present hour.

In the next reign, which was the reign of EDWARD, surnamed THE ELDER, who was chosen in council to succeed, a nephew of KING ALFRED troubled the country by trying to obtain the throne. The Danes in the East of England took part with this usurper (perhaps because they had honoured his uncle so much, and

honoured him for his uncle's sake), and there was hard fighting; but, the King, with the assistance of his sister, gained the day, and reigned in peace for four and twenty years. He gradually extended his power over the whole of England, and so the Seven Kingdoms were united into one.

When England thus became one kingdom, ruled over by one Saxon king, the Saxons had been settled in the country more than four hundred and fifty years. Great changes had taken place in its customs during that time. The Saxons were still greedy eaters and great drinkers, and their feasts were often of a noisy and drunken kind; but many new comforts and even elegances had become known, and were fast increasing. Hangings for the walls of rooms, where, in these modern days, we paste up paper, are known to have been sometimes made of silk, ornamented with birds and flowers in needlework. Tables and chairs were curiously carved in different woods; were sometimes decorated with gold or silver; sometimes even made of those precious metals. Knives and spoons were used at table; golden ornaments were worn—with silk and cloth, and golden tissues and embroideries; dishes were made of gold and silver, brass and bone. There were varieties of drinking-horns, bedsteads, musical instruments. A harp was passed round, at a feast, like the drinking-bowl, from guest to guest; and each one usually sang or played when his turn came. The weapons of the Saxons were stoutly made, and among them was a terrible iron hammer that gave deadly blows, and was long remembered. The Saxons themselves were a handsome people. The men were proud of their long fair hair, parted on the forehead; their ample beards, their fresh complexions, and clear eyes. The beauty of the Saxon women filled all England with a new delight and grace.

I have more to tell of the Saxons yet, but I stop to say this now, because under the GREAT ALFRED, all the best points of the English-Saxon character were first encouraged, and in him first shown. It has been the greatest character among the nations of the earth. Wherever the descendants of the Saxon race have gone, have sailed, or otherwise made their way, even to the remotest regions of the world, they have been patient, persevering, never to be broken in spirit, never to be turned aside from enterprises on which they have resolved. In Europe, Asia, Africa, America, the whole world over; in the desert, in the forest, on the sea; scorched by a burning sun, or frozen by ice that never melts;

the Saxon blood remains unchanged. Where-soever that race goes, there, law, and industry, and safety for life and property, and all the great results of steady perseverance, are certain to arise.

I pause to think with admiration, of the noble king who, in his single person, possessed all the Saxon virtues. Whom misfortune could not subdue, whom prosperity could not spoil, whose perseverance nothing could shake. Who was hopeful in defeat, and generous in success. Who loved justice, freedom, truth, and knowledge. Who, in his care to instruct his people, probably did more to preserve the beautiful old Saxon language, than I can imagine. Without whom, the English tongue in which I tell this story might have wanted half its meaning. As it is said that his spirit still inspires some of our best English laws, so, let you and I pray that it may animate our English hearts, at least to this—to resolve, when we see any of our fellow-creatures left in ignorance, that we will do our best, while life is in us, to have them taught; and to tell those rulers whose duty it is to teach them, and who neglect their duty, that they have profited very little by all the years that have rolled away since the year nine hundred and one, and that they are far behind the bright example of KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND UNDER ATHELSTAN AND THE SIX BOY-KINGS.



ATHELSTAN, the son of Edward the Elder, succeeded that king. He reigned only fifteen years; but he remembered the glory of his grandfather, the great Alfred, and governed England well. He reduced the turbulent people of Wales, and obliged them to pay him a tribute in money, and in cattle, and to send him their best hawks and hounds. He was victorious over the Cornish men, who were not yet quiet under the Saxon government. He restored such of the old laws as were good, and had fallen into disuse; made some wise new laws, and took care of the poor and weak. A strong alliance, made against him by ANLAF a Danish prince, CONSTANTINE King of the Scots, and the people of North Wales, he broke and defeated in one great battle, long famous for the vast numbers slain in it. After that, he had a quiet reign;

the lords and ladies about him had leisure to become polite and agreeable ; and foreign princes were glad (as they have sometimes been since) to come to England on visits to the English court.

When Athelstan died, at forty-seven years old, his brother EDMUND, who was only eighteen, became king. He was the first of six boy-kings, as you will presently know.

They called him the Magnificent, because he showed a taste for improvement and refinement. But he was beset by the Danes, and had a short and troubled reign, which came to a troubled end. One night, when he was feasting in his hall, and had eaten much and drunk deep, he saw, among the company, a noted robber named LEOF, who had been banished from England. Made very angry by the boldness of this man, the King turned to his cup-bearer, and said, "There is a robber sitting at the table yonder, who, for his crimes, is an outlaw in the land—a hunted wolf, whose life any man may take, at any time. Command that robber to depart!" "I will not depart!" said Leof. "No?" cried the King. "No, by the Lord!" said Leof. Upon that the King rose from his seat, and, making passionately at the robber, and seizing him by his long hair, tried to throw him down. But the robber had a dagger underneath his cloak, and, in the scuffle, stabbed the King to death. That done, he set his back against the wall, and fought so desperately, that although he was soon cut to pieces by the King's armed men, and the wall and pavement were splashed with his blood, yet it was not before he had killed and wounded many of them. You may imagine what rough lives the kings of those times led, when one of them could struggle, half drunk, with a public robber in his own dining-hall, and be stabbed in the presence of the company who ate and drank with him.

Then succeeded the boy-king EDRED, who was weak and sickly in body, but of a strong mind. And his armies fought the Northmen, the Danes, and Norwegians, or the Sea-Kings, as they were called, and beat them for the time. And, in nine years, Edred died, and passed away.

Then came the boy-king EDWY, fifteen years of age ; but the real king, who had the real power, was a monk named DUNSTAN—a clever priest, a little mad, and not a little proud and cruel.

Dunstan was then Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, whither the body of King Edmund the Magnificent was carried, to be buried. While yet a boy, he had got out of his bed one night

(being then in a fever), and walked about Glastonbury Church when it was under repair ; and, because he did not tumble off some scaffolds that were there, and break his neck, it was reported that he had been shown over the building by an angel. He had also made a harp that was said to play of itself—which it very likely did, as Æolian Harps, which are played by the wind, and are understood now, always do. For these wonders he had been once denounced by his enemies, who were jealous of his favour with the late King Athelstan, as a magician ; and he had been waylaid, bound hand and foot, and thrown into a marsh. But he got out again, somehow, to cause a great deal of trouble yet.

The priests of those days were, generally, the only scholars. They were learned in many things. Having to make their own convents and monasteries on uncultivated grounds that were granted to them by the Crown, it was necessary that they should be good farmers and good gardeners, or their lands would have been too poor to support them. For the decoration of the chapels where they prayed, and for the comfort of the refectories where they ate and drank, it was necessary that there should be good carpenters, good smiths, good painters, among them. For their greater safety in sickness and accident, living alone by themselves in solitary places, it was necessary that they should study the virtues of plants and herbs, and should know how to dress cuts, burns, scalds, and bruises, and how to set broken limbs. Accordingly, they taught themselves, and one another, a great variety of useful arts ; and became skilful in agriculture, medicine, surgery, and handicraft. And when they wanted the aid of any little piece of machinery, which would be simple enough now, but was marvellous then, to impose a trick upon the poor peasants, they knew very well how to make it ; and *did* make it many a time and often, I have no doubt.

Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, was one of the most sagacious of these monks. He was an ingenious smith, and worked at a forge in a little cell. This cell was made too short to admit of his lying at full length when he went to sleep—as if *that* did any good to anybody !—and he used to tell the most extraordinary lies about demons and spirits, who, he said, came there to persecute him. For instance, he related that, one day when he was at work, the devil looked in at the little window, and tried to tempt him to lead a life of idle pleasure ; whereupon, having his pincers in the fire, red hot, he seized the devil by the nose, and put him to such pain,

that his bellowings were heard for miles and miles. Some people are inclined to think this nonsense a part of Dunstan's madness (for his head never quite recovered the fever), but I think not. I observe that it induced the ignorant people to consider him a holy man, and that it made him very powerful. Which was exactly what he always wanted.

On the day of the coronation of the handsome boy-king Edwy, it was remarked by Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury (who was a Dane by birth), that the King quietly left the coronation feast, while all the company were there. Odo, much displeased, sent his friend Dunstan to seek him. Dunstan finding him in the company of his beautiful young wife ELGIVA, and her mother ETHELGIVA, a good and virtuous lady, not only grossly abused them, but dragged the young King back into the feasting-hall by force. Some, again, think Dunstan did this because the young King's fair wife was his own cousin, and the monks objected to people marrying their own cousins; but I believe he did it because he was an imperious, audacious, ill-conditioned priest, who, having loved a young lady himself before he became a sour monk, hated all love now, and everything belonging to it.

The young King was quite old enough to feel this insult. Dunstan had been Treasurer in the last reign, and he soon charged Dunstan with having taken some of the last King's money. The Glastonbury Abbot fled to Belgium (very narrowly escaping some pursuers who were sent to put out his eyes, as you will wish they had, when you read what follows), and his abbey was given to priests who were married; whom he always, both before and afterwards, opposed. But he quickly conspired with his friend, Odo the Dane, to set up the King's young brother, EDGAR, as his rival for the throne; and, not content with this revenge, he caused the beautiful queen Elgiva, though a lovely girl of only seventeen or eighteen, to be stolen from one of the Royal Palaces, branded in the cheek with a red-hot iron, and sold into slavery in Ireland. But the Irish people pitied and befriended her; and they said, "Let us restore the girl-queen to the boy-king, and make the young lovers happy!" and they cured her of her cruel wound, and sent her home as beautiful as before. But the villain Dunstan, and that other villain, Odo, caused her to be waylaid at Gloucester as she was joyfully hurrying to join her husband, and to be hacked and hewn with swords, and to be barbarously maimed and lamed, and left to die. When Edwy the Fair (his people called him so, because he was so young and handsome) heard

of her dreadful fate, he died of a broken heart; and so the pitiful story of the poor young wife and husband ends! Ah! Better to be two cottagers in these better times, than king and queen of England in those bad days, though never so fair!

Then came the boy-king EDGAR, called the Peaceful, fifteen years old. Dunstan, being still the real king, drove all married priests out of the monasteries and abbeys, and replaced them by solitary monks like himself, of the rigid order called the Benedictines. He made himself Archbishop of Canterbury, for his greater glory; and exercised such power over the neighbouring British princes, and so collected them about the King, that once, when the King held his court at Chester, and went on the river Dee to visit the monastery of St. John, the eight oars of his boat were pulled (as the people used to delight in relating in stories and songs) by eight crowned kings, and steered by the King of England. As Edgar was very obedient to Dunstan and the monks, they took great pains to represent him as the best of kings. But he was really profligate, debauched, and vicious. He once forcibly carried off a young lady from the convent at Wilton; and Dunstan, pretending to be very much shocked, condemned him not to wear his crown upon his head for seven years—no great punishment, I dare say, as it can hardly have been a more comfortable ornament to wear, than a stewpan without a handle. His marriage with his second wife, ELFRIDA, is one of the worst events of his reign. Hearing of the beauty of this lady, he despatched his favourite courtier, ATHELWOLD, to her father's castle in Devonshire, to see if she were really as charming as fame reported. Now, she was so exceedingly beautiful that Athelwold fell in love with her himself, and married her; but he told the King that she was only rich—not handsome. The King, suspecting the truth when they came home, resolved to pay the newly married couple a visit; and, suddenly, told Athelwold to prepare for his immediate coming. Athelwold, terrified, confessed to his young wife what he had said and done, and implored her to disguise her beauty by some ugly dress or silly manner, that he might be safe from the King's anger. She promised that she would; but she was a proud woman, who would far rather have been a queen than the wife of a courtier. She dressed herself in her best dress, and adorned herself with her richest jewels; and when the King came, presently, he discovered the cheat. So, he caused his false friend, Athelwold, to be murdered in a wood, and married his widow—

this bad Elfrida. Six or seven years afterwards, he died; and was buried, as if he had been all that the monks said he was, in the abbey of Glastonbury, which he—or Dunstan for him—had much enriched.

England, in one part of this reign, was so troubled by wolves, which, driven out of the open country, hid themselves in the mountains of Wales when they were not attacking travellers and animals, that the tribute payable by the Welsh people was forgiven them, on condition of their producing, every year, three hundred wolves' heads. And the Welshmen were so sharp upon the wolves, to save their money, that in four years there was not a wolf left.

Then came the boy-king, EDWARD, called the Martyr, from the manner of his death. Elfrida had a son, named ÆTHELRED, for whom she claimed the throne; but Dunstan did not choose to favour him, and he made Edward king. The boy was hunting, one day, down in Dorsetshire, when he rode near to Corfe Castle, where Elfrida and Ethelred lived. Wishing to see them kindly, he rode away from his attendants and galloped to the castle gate, where he arrived at twilight, and blew his hunting-horn. "You are welcome, dear King," said Elfrida, coming out, with her brightest smiles. "Pray you dismount and enter." "Not so, dear madam," said the King. "My company will miss me, and fear that I have met with some harm. Please you to give me a cup of wine, that I may drink here, in the saddle, to you and to my little brother, and so ride away with the good speed I have made in riding here." Elfrida, going in to bring the wine, whispered an armed servant, one of her attendants, who stole out of the darkening gateway, and crept round behind the King's horse. As the King raised the cup to his lips, saying, "Health!" to the wicked woman who was smiling on him, and to his innocent brother whose hand she held in hers, and who was only ten years old, this armed man made a spring and stabbed him in the back. He dropped the cup and spurred his horse away; but, soon fainting with loss of blood, drooped from the saddle, and, in his fall, entangled one of his feet in the stirrup. The frightened horse dashed on; trailing his rider's curls upon the ground; dragging his smooth young face through ruts, and stones, and briars, and fallen leaves, and mud; until the hunters, tracking the animal's course by the King's blood, caught his bridle, and released the disfigured body.

Then came the sixth and last of the boy-kings, ÆTHELRED, whom Elfrida, when he cried

out at the sight of his murdered brother riding away from the castle gate, unmercifully beat with a torch which she snatched from one of the attendants. The people so disliked this boy, on account of his cruel mother and the murder she had done to promote him, that Dunstan would not have had him for king, but would have made EDGITHA, the daughter of the dead King Edgar, and of the lady whom he stole out of the convent at Wilton, Queen of England, if she would have consented. But she knew the stories of the youthful kings too well, and would not be persuaded from the convent where she lived in peace; so, Dunstan put Ethelred on the throne, having no one else to put there, and gave him the nickname of THE UNREADY—knowing that he wanted resolution and firmness.

At first, Elfrida possessed great influence over the young King, but, as he grew older and came of age, her influence declined. The infamous woman, not having it in her power to do any more evil, then retired from court, and, according to the fashion of the time, built churches and monasteries, to expiate her guilt. As if a church, with a steeple reaching to the very stars, would have been any sign of true repentance for the blood of the poor boy, whose murdered form was trailed at his horse's heels! As if she could have buried her wickedness beneath the senseless stones of the whole world, piled up one upon another, for the monks to live in!

About the ninth or tenth year of this reign, Dunstan died. He was growing old then, but was as stern and artful as ever. Two circumstances that happened in connexion with him, in this reign of Ethelred, made a great noise. Once, he was present at a meeting of the Church, when the question was discussed whether priests should have permission to marry; and, as he sat with his head hung down, apparently thinking about it, a voice seemed to come out of a crucifix in the room, and warn the meeting to be of his opinion. This was some juggling of Dunstan's, and was probably his own voice disguised. But he played off a worse juggle than that soon afterwards; for, another meeting being held on the same subject, and he and his supporters being seated on one side of a great room, and their opponents on the other, he rose and said, "To Christ himself, as Judge, do I commit this cause!" Immediately on these words being spoken, the floor where the opposite party sat gave way, and some were killed and many wounded. You may be pretty sure that it had been weakened under Dunstan's direction, and that it fell at Dunstan's signal. His part of the

floor did not go down. No, no. He was too good a workman for that.

When he died, the monks settled that he was a Saint, and called him Saint Dunstan ever afterwards. They might just as well have settled that he was a coach-horse, and could just as easily have called him one.

Ethelred the Unready was glad enough, I dare say, to be rid of this holy saint; but, left to himself, he was a poor weak king, and his reign was a reign of defeat and shame. The restless Danes, led by SWEYN, a son of the King of Denmark who had quarrelled with his father and had been banished from home, again came into England, and, year after year, attacked and despoiled large towns. To coax these sea-kings away, the weak Ethelred paid them money; but, the more money he paid, the more money the Danes wanted. At first, he gave them ten thousand pounds; on their next invasion, sixteen thousand pounds; on their next invasion, four and twenty thousand pounds; to pay which large sums, the unfortunate English people were heavily taxed. But, as the Danes still came back and wanted more, he thought it would be a good plan to marry into some powerful foreign family that would help him with soldiers. So, in the year one thousand and two, he courted and married Emma, the sister of Richard Duke of Normandy; a lady who was called the Flower of Normandy.

And now a terrible deed was done in England, the like of which was never done on English ground before or since. On the thirteenth of November, in pursuance of secret instructions sent by the King over the whole country, the inhabitants of every town and city armed, and murdered all the Danes who were their neighbours. Young and old, babies and soldiers, men and women, every Dane was killed. No doubt there were among them many ferocious men who had done the English great wrong, and whose pride and insolence, in swaggering in the houses of the English and insulting their wives and daughters, had become unbearable; but no doubt there were also among them many peaceful Christian Danes who had married English women and become like English men. They were all slain, even to GUNHILDA, the sister of the King of Denmark, married to an English lord; who was first obliged to see the murder of her husband and her child, and then was killed herself.

When the King of the sea-kings heard of this deed of blood, he swore that he would have a great revenge. He raised an army, and a mightier fleet of ships than ever yet had sailed

to England; and in all his army there was not a slave or an old man, but every soldier was a free man, and the son of a free man, and in the prime of life, and sworn to be revenged upon the English nation, for the massacre of that dread thirteenth of November, when his countrymen and countrywomen, and the little children whom they loved, were killed with fire and sword. And so, the sea-kings came to England in many great ships, each bearing the flag of its own commander. Golden eagles, ravens, dragons, dolphins, beasts of prey, threatened England from the prows of those ships, as they came onward through the water; and were reflected in the shining shields that hung upon their sides. The ship that bore the standard of the King of the sea-kings was carved and painted like a mighty serpent; and the King in his anger prayed that the Gods in whom he trusted might all desert him, if his serpent did not strike its fangs into England's heart.

And indeed it did. For, the great army landing from the great fleet, near Exeter, went forward, laying England waste, and striking their lances in the earth as they advanced, or throwing them into rivers, in token of their making all the island theirs. In remembrance of the black November night when the Danes were murdered, wheresoever the invaders came, they made the Saxons prepare and spread for them great feasts; and when they had eaten those feasts, and had drunk a curse to England with wild rejoicings, they drew their swords, and killed their Saxon entertainers, and marched on. For six long years they carried on this war: burning the crops, farmhouses, barns, mills, granaries; killing the labourers in the fields; preventing the seed from being sown in the ground; causing famine and starvation; leaving only heaps of ruin and smoking ashes, where they had found rich towns. To crown this misery, English officers and men deserted, and even the favourites of Ethelred the Unready, becoming traitors, seized many of the English ships, turned pirates against their own country, and aided by a storm occasioned the loss of nearly the whole English navy.

There was but one man of note, at this miserable pass, who was true to his country and the feeble King. He was a priest, and a brave one. For twenty days, the Archbishop of Canterbury defended that city against its Danish besiegers; and when a traitor in the town threw the gates open and admitted them, he said, in chains, "I will not buy my life with money that must be extorted from the suffering people. Do with me what you please!" Again and

again, he steadily refused to purchase his release with gold wrung from the poor.

At last, the Danes being tired of this, and being assembled at a drunken merry-making, had him brought into the feasting-hall.

"Now, bishop," they said, "we want gold!"

He looked round on the crowd of angry faces : from the shaggy beards close to him, to the shaggy beards against the walls, where men were mounted on tables and forms to see him over the heads of others : and he knew that his time was come.

"I have no gold," said he.

"Get it, bishop!" they all thundered.

"That, I have often told you, I will not," said he.

They gathered closer round him, threatening, but he stood unmoved. Then, one man struck him ; then, another ; then a cursing soldier picked up from a heap in a corner of the hall, where fragments had been rudely thrown at dinner, a great ox-bone, and cast it at his face, from which the blood came spurting forth ; then, others ran to the same heap, and knocked him down with other bones, and bruised and battered him ; until one soldier whom he had baptised (willing, as I hope for the sake of that soldier's soul, to shorten the sufferings of the good man) struck him dead with his battle-axe.

If Ethelred had had the heart to emulate the courage of this noble archbishop, he might have done something yet. But he paid the Danes forty-eight thousand pounds, instead, and gained so little by the cowardly act, that Sweyn soon afterwards came over to subdue all England. So broken was the attachment of the English people, by this time, to their incapable King and their forlorn country which could not protect them, that they welcomed Sweyn on all sides, as a deliverer. London faithfully stood out, as long as the King was within its walls ; but, when he sneaked away, it also welcomed the Dane. Then, all was over ; and the King took refuge abroad with the Duke of Normandy, who had already given shelter to the King's wife, once the Flower of that country, and to her children.

Still, the English people, in spite of their sad sufferings, could not quite forget the great King Alfred and the Saxon race. When Sweyn died suddenly, in little more than a month after he had been proclaimed King of England, they generously sent to Ethelred, to say that they would have him for their King again, "if he would only govern them better than he had governed them before." The Unready, instead of coming himself, sent Edward, one of his sons,

to make promises for him. At last, he followed, and the English declared him King. The Danes declared CANUTE, the son of Sweyn, King. Thus, direful war began again, and lasted for three years, when the Unready died. And I know of nothing better that he did, in all his reign of eight and thirty years.

Was Canute to be King now? Not over the Saxons, they said ; they must have EDMUND, one of the sons of the Unready, who was surnamed IRONSIDE, because of his strength and stature. Edmund and Canute thereupon fell to, and fought five battles—O unhappy England, what a fighting-ground it was!—and then Ironside, who was a big man, proposed to Canute, who was a little man, that they two should fight it out in single combat. If Canute had been the big man, he would probably have said yes, but, being the little man, he decidedly said no. However, he declared that he was willing to divide the kingdom—to take all that lay north of Watling Street, as the old Roman military road from Dover to Chester was called, and to give Ironside all that lay south of it. Most men being weary of so much bloodshed, this was done. But Canute soon became sole King of England ; for Ironside died suddenly within two months. Some think that he was killed, and killed by Canute's orders. No one knows.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLAND UNDER CANUTE THE DANE.



CANUTE reigned eighteen years. He was a merciless King at first. After he had clasped the hands of the Saxon chiefs, in token of the sincerity with which he swore to be just and good to them in return for their acknowledging him, he denounced and slew many of them, as well as many relations of the late King. "He who brings me the head of one of my enemies," he used to say, "shall be dearer to me than a brother." And he was so severe in hunting down his enemies, that he must have got together a pretty large family of these dear brothers. He was strongly inclined to kill EDMUND and EDWARD, two children, sons of poor Ironside ; but, being afraid to do so in England, he sent them over to the King of Sweden, with a request that the King would be so good as "dispose of them." If the King of Sweden had been like many, many other men of that day, he would have had their innocent

throats cut ; but he was a kind man, and brought them up tenderly.

Normandy ran much in Canute's mind. In Normandy were the two children of the late King—EDWARD and ALFRED by name ; and their uncle the Duke might one day claim the crown for them. But the Duke showed so little inclination to do so now, that he proposed to Canute to marry his sister, the widow of The Unready ; who, being but a showy flower, and caring for nothing so much as becoming a queen again, left her children and was wedded to him.

Successful and triumphant, assisted by the valour of the English in his foreign wars, and with little strife to trouble him at home, Canute had a prosperous reign, and made many improvements. He was a poet and a musician. He grew sorry, as he grew older, for the blood he had shed at first ; and went to Rome in a Pilgrim's dress, by way of washing it out. He gave a great deal of money to foreigners on his journey ; but he took it from the English before he started. On the whole, however, he certainly became a far better man when he had no opposition to contend with, and was as great a King as England had known for some time.

The old writers of history relate how that Canute was one day disgusted with his courtiers for their flattery, and how he caused his chair to be set on the sea-shore, and feigned to command the tide as it came up not to wet the edge of his robe, for the land was his ; how the tide came up, of course, without regarding him ; and how he then turned to his flatterers, and rebuked them, saying, what was the might of any earthly king, to the might of the Creator, who could say unto the sea, " Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther ! " We may learn from this, I think, that a little sense will go a long way in a king ; and that courtiers are not easily cured of flattery, nor kings of a liking for it. If the courtiers of Canute had not known, long before, that the King was fond of flattery, they would have known better than to offer it in such large doses. And if they had not known that he was vain of this speech (anything but a wonderful speech, it seems to me, if a good child had made it), they would not have been at such great pains to repeat it. I fancy I see them all on the sea-shore together ; the King's chair sinking in the sand ; the King in a mighty good humour with his own wisdom ; and the courtiers pretending to be quite stunned by it !

It is not the sea alone that is bidden to go " thus far, and no farther." The great command goes forth to all the kings upon the earth, and went to Canute in the year one thousand and

thirty-five, and stretched him dead upon his bed. Beside it, stood his Norman wife. Perhaps, as the King looked his last upon her, he, who had so often thought distrustfully of Normandy, long ago, thought once more of the two exiled Princes in their uncle's court ; and of the little favour they could feel for either Danes or Saxons, and of a rising cloud in Normandy that slowly moved towards England.

CHAPTER VI.

ENGLAND UNDER HAROLD HAREFOOT, HARDICANUTE, AND EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.



CANUTE left three sons, by name SWEYN, HAROLD, and HARDICANUTE ; but his Queen, Emma, once the Flower of Normandy, was the mother of only Hardicanute. Canute had wished his dominions to be divided between the three, and had wished Harold to have England ; but the Saxon people in the South of England, headed by a nobleman with great possessions, called the powerful EARL GODWIN (who is said to have been originally a poor cow-boy), opposed this, and desired to have, instead, either Hardicanute, or one of the two exiled Princes who were over in Normandy. It seemed so certain that there would be more bloodshed to settle this dispute, that many people left their homes, and took refuge in the woods and swamps. Happily, however, it was agreed to refer the whole question to a great meeting at Oxford, which decided that Harold should have all the country north of the Thames, with London for his capital city, and that Hardicanute should have all the south. The quarrel was so arranged ; and, as Hardicanute was in Denmark troubling himself very little about anything but eating and getting drunk, his mother and Earl Godwin governed the south for him.

They had hardly begun to do so, and the trembling people who had hidden themselves were scarcely at home again, when Edward, the elder of the two exiled Princes, came over from Normandy with a few followers, to claim the English Crown. His mother Emma, however, who only cared for her last son Hardicanute, instead of assisting him, as he expected, opposed him so strongly with all her influence that he was very soon glad to get safely back. His brother Alfred was not so fortunate. Believing in an affectionate letter, written some time afterwards to him and his brother, in his mother's

name (but whether really with or without his mother's knowledge is now uncertain), he allowed himself to be tempted over to England, with a good force of soldiers, and landing on the Kentish coast, and being met and welcomed by Earl Godwin, proceeded into Surrey, as far as the town of Guildford. Here, he and his men halted in the evening to rest, having still the Earl in their company; who had ordered lodgings and good cheer for them. But, in the dead of the night, when they were off their guard, being divided into small parties sleeping soundly after a long march and a plentiful supper in different houses, they were set upon by the King's troops, and taken prisoners. Next morning they were drawn out in a line, to the number of six hundred men, and were barbarously tortured and killed, with the exception of every tenth man, who was sold into slavery. As to the wretched Prince Alfred, he was stripped naked, tied to a horse and sent away into the Isle of Ely, where his eyes were torn out of his head, and where in a few days he miserably died. I am not sure that the Earl had wilfully entrapped him, but I suspect it strongly.

Harold was now King all over England, though it is doubtful whether the Archbishop of Canterbury (the greater part of the priests were Saxons, and not friendly to the Danes) ever consented to crown him. Crowned or uncrowned, with the Archbishop's leave or without it, he was King for four years: after which short reign he died, and was buried; having never done much in life but go a hunting. He was such a fast runner at this, his favourite sport, that the people called him Harold Harefoot.

Hardicanute was then at Bruges, in Flanders, plotting with his mother (who had gone over there after the cruel murder of Prince Alfred), for the invasion of England. The Danes and Saxons, finding themselves without a King, and dreading new disputes, made common cause, and joined in inviting him to occupy the Throne. He consented, and soon troubled them enough; for he brought over numbers of Danes, and taxed the people so insupportably to enrich those greedy favourites that there were many insurrections, especially one at Worcester, where the citizens rose and killed his tax-collectors; in revenge for which he burned their city. He was a brutal King, whose first public act was to order the dead body of poor Harold Harefoot to be dug up, beheaded, and thrown into the river. His end was worthy of such a beginning. He fell down drunk, with a goblet of wine in his hand, at a wedding-feast at Lambeth, given in honour of the marriage of his standard-bearer, a

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Dane, named TOWED THE PROUD. And he never spoke again.

EDWARD, afterwards called by the monks THE CONFESSOR, succeeded; and his first act was to oblige his mother Emma, who had favoured him so little, to retire into the country; where she died some ten years afterwards. He was the exiled prince whose brother Alfred had been so foully killed. He had been invited over from Normandy by Hardicanute, in the course of his short reign of two years, and had been handsomely treated at court. His cause was now favoured by the powerful Earl Godwin, and he was soon made King. This Earl had been suspected by the people, ever since Prince Alfred's cruel death; he had even been tried in the last reign for the Prince's murder, but had been pronounced not guilty; chiefly, as it was supposed, because of a present he had made to the swinish King, of a gilded ship with a figure-head of solid gold, and a crew of eighty splendidly armed men. It was his interest to help the new King with his power, if the new King would help him against the popular distrust and hatred. So they made a bargain. Edward the Confessor got the Throne. The Earl got more power and more land, and his daughter Editha was made queen; for it was a part of their compact that the King should take her for his wife.

But, although she was a gentle lady, in all things worthy to be beloved—good, beautiful, sensible, and kind—the King from the first neglected her. Her father and her six proud brothers, resenting this cold treatment, harassed the King greatly by exerting all their power to make him unpopular. Having lived so long in Normandy, he preferred the Normans to the English. He made a Norman Archbishop, and Norman Bishops; his great officers and favourites were all Normans; he introduced the Norman fashions and the Norman language; in imitation of the state custom of Normandy, he attached a great seal to his state documents, instead of merely marking them, as the Saxon Kings had done, with the sign of the cross—just as poor people who have never been taught to write, now make the same mark for their names. All this, the powerful Earl Godwin and his six proud sons represented to the people as disfavour shown towards the English; and thus they daily increased their own power, and daily diminished the power of the King.

They were greatly helped by an event that occurred when he had reigned eight years. Eustace, Earl of Boulogne, who had married the King's sister, came to England on a visit. After staying at the court some time, he set

forth, with his numerous train of attendants, to return home. They were to embark at Dover. Entering that peaceful town in armour, they took possession of the best houses, and noisily demanded to be lodged and entertained without payment. One of the bold men of Dover, who would not endure to have these domineering strangers jingling their heavy swords and iron corselets up and down his house, eating his meat and drinking his strong liquor, stood in his doorway and refused admission to the first armed man who came there. The armed man drew, and wounded him. The man of Dover struck the armed man dead. Intelligence of what he had done, spreading through the streets to where the Count Eustace and his men were standing by their horses, bridle in hand, they passionately mounted, galloped to the house, surrounded it, forced their way in (the doors and windows being closed when they came up), and killed the man of Dover at his own fireside. They then clattered through the streets, cutting down and riding over men, women, and children. This did not last long, you may believe. The men of Dover set upon them with great fury, killed nineteen of the foreigners, wounded many more, and, blockading the road to the port so that they should not embark, beat them out of the town by the way they had come. Hereupon Count Eustace rides as hard as man can ride to Gloucester, where Edward is, surrounded by Norman monks and Norman lords. "Justice!" cries the Count, "upon the men of Dover, who have set upon and slain my people!" The King sends immediately for the powerful Earl Godwin, who happens to be near; reminds him that Dover is under his government; and orders him to repair to Dover and do military execution on the inhabitants. "It does not become you," says the proud Earl in reply, "to condemn without a hearing those whom you have sworn to protect. I will not do it."

The King, therefore, summoned the Earl, on pain of banishment and loss of his titles and property, to appear before the court to answer this disobedience. The Earl refused to appear. He, his eldest son Harold, and his second son Sweyn, hastily raised as many fighting men as their utmost power could collect, and demanded to have Count Eustace and his followers surrendered to the justice of the country. The King, in his turn, refused to give them up, and raised a strong force. After some treaty and delay, the troops of the great Earl and his sons began to fall off. The Earl, with a part of his family and abundance of treasure, sailed to Flanders; Harold escaped to Ireland; and the

power of the great family was for that time gone in England. But, the people did not forget them.

Then, Edward the Confessor, with the true meanness of a mean spirit, visited his dislike of the once powerful father and sons upon the helpless daughter and sister, his unoffending wife, whom all who saw her (her husband and his monks excepted) loved. He seized rapaciously upon her fortune and her jewels, and allowing her only one attendant, confined her in a gloomy convent, of which a sister of his—no doubt an unpleasant lady after his own heart—was abbess or jailer.

Having got Earl Godwin and his six sons well out of his way, the King favoured the Normans more than ever. He invited over WILLIAM, DUKE OF NORMANDY, the son of that Duke who had received him and his murdered brother long ago, and of a peasant girl, a tanner's daughter, with whom that Duke had fallen in love for her beauty as he saw her washing clothes in a brook. William, who was a great warrior, with a passion for fine horses, dogs, and arms, accepted the invitation; and the Normans in England, finding themselves more numerous than ever when he arrived with his retinue, and held in still greater honour at court than before, became more and more haughty towards the people, and were more and more disliked by them.

The old Earl Godwin, though he was abroad, knew well how the people felt; for, with part of the treasure he had carried away with him, he kept spies and agents in his pay all over England. Accordingly, he thought the time was come for fitting out a great expedition against the Norman-loving King. With it, he sailed to the Isle of Wight, where he was joined by his son Harold, the most gallant and brave of all his family. And so the father and son came sailing up the Thames to Southwark; great numbers of the people declaring for them, and shouting for the English Earl and the English Harold, against the Norman favourites!

The King was at first as blind and stubborn as kings usually have been whensoever they have been in the hands of monks. But the people rallied so thickly round the old Earl and his son, and the old Earl was so steady in demanding without bloodshed the restoration of himself and his family to their rights, that at last the court took the alarm. The Norman Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Norman Bishop of London, surrounded by their retainers, fought their way out of London, and escaped from Essex to France in a fishing-boat. The other Norman favourites dispersed in all

directions. The old Earl and his sons (except Sweyn, who had committed crimes against the law) were restored to their possessions and dignities. Editha, the virtuous and lovely Queen of the insensible King, was triumphantly released from her prison, the convent, and once more sat in her chair of state, arrayed in the jewels of which, when she had no champion to support her rights, her cold-blooded husband had deprived her.

The old Earl Godwin did not long enjoy his restored fortune. He fell down in a fit at the King's table, and died upon the third day afterwards. Harold succeeded to his power, and to a far higher place in the attachment of the people than his father had ever held. By his valour he subdued the King's enemies in many bloody fights. He was vigorous against rebels in Scotland—this was the time when Macbeth slew Duncan, upon which event our English Shakespeare, hundreds of years afterwards, wrote his great tragedy; and he killed the restless Welsh King GRIFFITH, and brought his head to England.

What Harold was doing at sea, when he was driven on the French coast by a tempest, is not at all certain; nor does it at all matter. That his ship was forced by a storm on that shore, and that he was taken prisoner, there is no doubt. In those barbarous days, all shipwrecked strangers were taken prisoners, and obliged to pay ransom. So, a certain Count Guy, who was the Lord of Ponthieu where Harold's disaster happened, seized him, instead of relieving him like a hospitable and Christian lord as he ought to have done, and expected to make a very good thing of it.

But Harold sent off immediately to Duke William of Normandy, complaining of this treatment; and the Duke no sooner heard of it than he ordered Harold to be escorted to the ancient town of Rouen, where he then was, and where he received him as an honoured guest. Now, some writers tell us that Edward the Confessor, who was by this time old and had no children, had made a will, appointing Duke William of Normandy his successor, and had informed the Duke of his having done so. There is no doubt that he was anxious about his successor; because he had even invited over, from abroad, EDWARD THE OUTLAW, a son of Ironside, who had come to England with his wife and three children, but whom the King had strangely refused to see when he did come, and who had died in London suddenly (princes were terribly liable to sudden death in those days), and had been buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. The King might possibly have made

such a will; or, having always been fond of the Normans, he might have encouraged Norman William to aspire to the English crown, by something that he said to him when he was staying at the English court. But, certainly William did now aspire to it; and knowing that Harold would be a powerful rival, he called together a great assembly of his nobles, offered Harold his daughter ADELE in marriage, informed him that he meant on King Edward's death to claim the English crown as his own inheritance, and required Harold then and there to swear to aid him. Harold, being in the Duke's power, took this oath upon the Missal, or Prayer-book. It is a good example of the superstitions of the monks, that this Missal, instead of being placed upon a table, was placed upon a tub; which, when Harold had sworn, was uncovered, and shown to be full of dead men's bones—bones, as the monks pretended, of saints. This was supposed to make Harold's oath a great deal more impressive and binding. As if the great name of the Creator of Heaven and earth could be made more solemn by a knuckle-bone, or a double-tooth, or a finger-nail, of Dunstan!

Within a week or two after Harold's return to England, the dreary old Confessor was found to be dying. After wandering in his mind like a very weak old man, he died. As he had put himself entirely in the hands of the monks when he was alive, they praised him lustily when he was dead. They had gone so far, already, as to persuade him that he could work miracles; and had brought people afflicted with a bad disorder of the skin, to him, to be touched and cured. This was called "touching for the King's Evil," which afterwards became a royal custom. You know, however, Who really touched the sick, and healed them; and you know His sacred name is not among the dusty line of human kings.

CHAPTER VII.

ENGLAND UNDER HAROLD THE SECOND, AND CONQUERED BY THE NORMANS.

HAROLD was crowned King of England on the very day of the maudlin Confessor's funeral. He had good need to be quick about it. When the news reached Norman William, hunting in his park at Rouen, he dropped his bow, returned to his palace, called his nobles to council, and presently sent ambassadors to Harold,

calling on him to keep his oath and resign the Crown. Harold would do no such thing. The barons of France leagued together round Duke William for the invasion of England. Duke William promised freely to distribute English wealth and English lands among them. The Pope sent to Normandy a consecrated banner, and a ring containing a hair which he warranted to have grown on the head of Saint Peter. He blessed the enterprise; and cursed Harold; and requested that the Normans would pay "Peter's Pence"—or a tax to himself of a penny a year on every house—a little more regularly in future, if they could make it convenient.

King Harold had a rebel brother in Flanders, who was a vassal of HAROLD HARDRADA, King of Norway. This brother, and this Norwegian King, joining their forces against England, with Duke William's help, won a fight in which the English were commanded by two nobles; and then besieged York. Harold, who was waiting for the Normans on the coast at Hastings, with his army, marched to Stamford Bridge upon the river Derwent to give them instant battle.

He found them drawn up in a hollow circle, marked out by their shining spears. Riding round this circle at a distance, to survey it, he saw a brave figure on horseback, in a blue mantle and a bright helmet, whose horse suddenly stumbled and threw him.

"Who is that man who has fallen?" Harold asked of one of his captains.

"The King of Norway," he replied.

"He is a tall and stately king," said Harold, "but his end is near."

He added, in a little while, "Go yonder to my brother, and tell him, if he withdraw his troops, he shall be Earl of Northumberland, and rich and powerful in England."

The captain rode away and gave the message.

"What will he give to my friend the King of Norway?" asked the brother.

"Seven feet of earth for a grave," replied the captain.

"No more?" returned the brother, with a smile.

"The King of Norway being a tall man, perhaps a little more," replied the captain.

"Ride back!" said the brother, "and tell King Harold to make ready for the fight!"

He did so, very soon. And such a fight King Harold led against that force, that his brother, and the Norwegian King, and every chief of note in all their host, except the Norwegian King's son, Olave, to whom he gave honourable dismissal, were left dead upon the

field. The victorious army marched to York. As King Harold sat there at the feast, in the midst of all his company, a stir was heard at the doors; and messengers all covered with mire from riding far and fast through broken ground came hurrying in, to report that the Normans had landed in England.

The intelligence was true. They had been tossed about by contrary winds, and some of their ships had been wrecked. A part of their own shore, to which they had been driven back, was strewn with Norman bodies. But they had once more made sail, led by the Duke's own galley, a present from his wife, upon the prow whereof the figure of a golden boy stood pointing towards England. By day, the banner of the three Lions of Normandy, the diverse coloured sails, the gilded vanes, the many decorations of this gorgeous ship, had glittered in the sun and sunny water; by night, a light had sparkled like a star at her mast-head. And now, encamped near Hastings, with their leader lying in the old Roman castle of Pevensey, the English retiring in all directions, the land for miles around scorched and smoking, fired and pillaged, was the whole Norman power, hopeful and strong on English ground.

Harold broke up the feast and hurried to London. Within a week, his army was ready. He sent out spies to ascertain the Norman strength. William took them, caused them to be led through his whole camp, and then dismissed. "The Normans," said these spies to Harold, "are not bearded on the upper lip as we English are, but are shorn. They are priests." "My men," replied Harold, with a laugh, "will find those priests good soldiers!"

"The Saxons," reported Duke William's outposts of Norman soldiers, who were instructed to retire as King Harold's army advanced, "rush on us through their pillaged country with the fury of madmen."

"Let them come, and come soon!" said Duke William.

Some proposals for a reconciliation were made, but were soon abandoned. In the middle of the month of October, in the year one thousand and sixty-six, the Normans and the English came front to front. All night the armies lay encamped before each other, in a part of the country then called Senlac, now called (in remembrance of them) Battle. With the first dawn of day, they arose. There, in the faint light, were the English on a hill; a wood behind them; in their midst, the Royal banner, representing a fighting warrior, woven in gold thread, adorned with precious stones; beneath

the banner, as it rustled in the wind, stood King Harold on foot, with two of his remaining brothers by his side; around them, still and silent as the dead, clustered the whole English army—every soldier covered by his shield, and bearing in his hand his dreaded English battle-axe.

On an opposite hill, in three lines, archers, foot-soldiers, horsemen, was the Norman force. Of a sudden, a great battle-cry, "God help us!" burst from the Norman lines. The English answered with their own battle-cry, "God's Rood! Holy Rood!" The Normans then came sweeping down the hill to attack the English.

There was one tall Norman Knight who rode before the Norman army on a prancing horse, throwing up his heavy sword and catching it, and singing of the bravery of his countrymen. An English Knight, who rode out from the English force to meet him, fell by this Knight's hand. Another English Knight rode out, and he fell too. But then a third rode out, and killed the Norman. This was in the first beginning of the fight. It soon raged everywhere.

The English keeping side by side in a great mass, cared no more for the showers of Norman arrows than if they had been showers of Norman rain. When the Norman horsemen rode against them, with their battle-axes they cut men and horses down. The Normans gave way. The English pressed forward. A cry went forth among the Norman troops that Duke William was killed. Duke William took off his helmet, in order that his face might be distinctly seen, and rode along the line before his men. This gave them courage. As they turned again to face the English, some of their Norman horse divided the pursuing body of the English from the rest, and thus all that foremost portion of the English army fell, fighting bravely. The main body still remaining firm, heedless of the Norman arrows, and with their battle-axes cutting down the crowds of horsemen when they rode up, like forests of young trees, Duke William pretended to retreat. The eager English followed. The Norman army closed again, and fell upon them with great slaughter.

"Still," said Duke William, "there are thousands of the English, firm as rocks around their King. Shoot upward, Norman archers, that your arrows may fall down upon their faces!"

The sun rose high, and sank, and the battle still raged. Through all the wild October day, the clash and din resounded in the air. In the red sunset, and in the white moonlight, heaps upon heaps of dead men lay strewn, a dreadful spectacle, all over the ground. King Harold,

wounded with an arrow in the eye, was nearly blind. His brothers were already killed. Twenty Norman Knights, whose battered armour had flashed fiery and golden in the sunshine all day long, and now looked silvery in the moonlight, dashed forward to seize the Royal banner from the English Knights and soldiers, still faithfully collected round their blinded King. The King received a mortal wound, and dropped. The English broke and fled. The Normans rallied, and the day was lost.

O what a sight beneath the moon and stars, when lights were shining in the tent of the victorious Duke William, which was pitched near the spot where Harold fell—and he and his Knights were carousing, within—and soldiers with torches, going slowly to and fro, without, sought for the corpse of Harold among piles of dead—and the warrior, worked in golden thread and precious stones, lay low, all torn and soiled with blood—and the three Norman Lions kept watch over the field!

CHAPTER VIII.

ENGLAND UNDER WILLIAM THE FIRST, THE NORMAN CONQUEROR.

UPON the ground where the brave Harold fell, William the Norman afterwards founded an abbey, which, under the name of Battle Abbey, was a rich and splendid place through many a troubled year, though now it is a grey ruin overgrown with ivy. But the first work he had to do, was to conquer the English thoroughly; and that, as you know by this time, was hard work for any man.

He ravaged several counties; he burned and plundered many towns; he laid waste scores upon scores of miles of pleasant country; he destroyed innumerable lives. At length STIGAND, Archbishop of Canterbury, with other representatives of the clergy and the people, went to his camp, and submitted to him. EDGAR, the insignificant son of Edmund Ironside, was proclaimed King by others, but nothing came of it. He fled to Scotland afterwards, where his sister, who was young and beautiful, married the Scottish King. Edgar himself was not important enough for anybody to care much about him.

On Christmas Day, William was crowned in Westminster Abbey, under the title of WILLIAM THE FIRST; but he is best known as WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. It was a strange coronation. One of the bishops who performed the ceremony

asked the Normans, in French, if they would have Duke William for their king? They answered Yes. Another of the bishops put the same question to the Saxons, in English. They too answered Yes, with a loud shout. The noise being heard by a guard of Norman horse-soldiers outside, was mistaken for resistance on the part of the English. The guard instantly set fire to the neighbouring houses, and a tumult ensued; in the midst of which the King, being left alone in the Abbey, with a few priests (and they all being in a terrible fright together), was hurriedly crowned. When the crown was placed upon his head, he swore to govern the English as well as the best of their own monarchs. I dare say you think, as I do, that if we except the Great Alfred, he might pretty easily have done that.

Numbers of the English nobles had been killed in the last disastrous battle. Their estates, and the estates of all the nobles who had fought against him there, King William seized upon, and gave to his own Norman knights and nobles. Many great English families of the present time acquired their English lands in this way, and are very proud of it.

But what is got by force must be maintained by force. These nobles were obliged to build castles all over England, to defend their new property; and, do what he would, the King could neither soothe nor quell the nation as he wished. He gradually introduced the Norman language and the Norman customs; yet, for a long time the great body of the English remained sullen and revengeful. On his going over to Normandy, to visit his subjects there, the oppressions of his half-brother ODO, whom he left in charge of his English kingdom, drove the people mad. The men of Kent even invited over, to take possession of Dover, their old enemy Count Eustace of Boulogne, who had led the fray when the Dover man was slain at his own fireside. The men of Hereford, aided by the Welsh, and commanded by a chief named *EDRIC THE WILD*, drove the Normans out of their country. Some of those who had been dispossessed of their lands, banded together in the North of England; some, in Scotland; some, in the thick woods and marshes; and whosoever they could fall upon the Normans, or upon the English who had submitted to the Normans, they fought, despoiled, and murdered, like the desperate outlaws that they were. Conspiracies were set on foot for a general massacre of the Normans, like the old massacre of the Danes. In short, the English were in a murderous mood all through the kingdom.

King William, fearing he might lose his conquest, came back, and tried to pacify the London people by soft words. He then set forth to repress the country people by stern deeds. Among the towns which he besieged, and where he killed and maimed the inhabitants without any distinction, sparing none, young or old, armed or unarmed, were Oxford, Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, York. In all these places, and in many others, fire and sword worked their utmost horrors, and made the land dreadful to behold. The streams and rivers were discoloured with blood; the sky was blackened with smoke; the fields were wastes of ashes; the waysides were heaped up with dead. Such are the fatal results of conquest and ambition! Although William was a harsh and angry man, I do not suppose that he deliberately meant to work this shocking ruin, when he invaded England. But what he had got by the strong hand, he could only keep by the strong hand, and in so doing he made England a great grave.

Two sons of Harold, by name *EDMUND* and *GODWIN*, came over from Ireland, with some ships, against the Normans, but were defeated. This was scarcely done, when the outlaws in the woods so harassed York, that the Governor sent to the King for help. The King despatched a general and a large force to occupy the town of Durham. The Bishop of that place met the general outside the town, and warned him not to enter, as he would be in danger there. The general cared nothing for the warning, and went in with all his men. That night, on every hill within sight of Durham, signal fires were seen to blaze. When the morning dawned, the English, who had assembled in great strength, forced the gates, rushed into the town, and slew the Normans every one. The English afterwards besought the Danes to come and help them. The Danes came, with two hundred and forty ships. The outlawed nobles joined them; they captured York, and drove the Normans out of that city. Then, William bribed the Danes to go away; and took such vengeance on the English, that all the former fire and sword, smoke and ashes, death and ruin, were nothing compared with it. In melancholy songs, and doleful stories, it was still sung and told by cottage fires on winter evenings, a hundred years afterwards, how, in those dreadful days of the Normans, there was not, from the River Humber to the River Tyne, one inhabited village left, nor one cultivated field—how there was nothing but a dismal ruin, where the human creatures and the beasts lay dead together.

The outlaws had, at this time, what they called a Camp of Refuge, in the midst of the fens of Cambridgeshire. Protected by those marshy grounds which were difficult of approach, they lay among the reeds and rushes, and were hidden by the mists that rose up from the watery earth. Now, there also was, at that time, over the sea in Flanders, an Englishman named HERWARD, whose father had died in his absence, and whose property had been given to a Norman. When he heard of this wrong that had been done him (from such of the exiled English as chanced to wander into that country), he longed for revenge; and joining the outlaws in their camp of refuge, became their commander. He was so good a soldier, that the Normans supposed him to be aided by enchantment. William, even after he had made a road three miles in length across the Cambridgeshire marshes, on purpose to attack this supposed enchanter, thought it necessary to engage an old lady, who pretended to be a sorceress, to come and do a little enchantment in the royal cause. For this purpose she was pushed on before the troops in a wooden tower; but Hereward very soon disposed of this unfortunate sorceress, by burning her, tower and all. The monks of the convent of Ely near at hand, however, who were fond of good living, and who found it very uncomfortable to have the country blockaded and their supplies of meat and drink cut off, showed the King a secret way of surprising the camp. So Hereward was soon defeated. Whether he afterwards died quietly, or whether he was killed after killing sixteen of the men who attacked him (as some old rhymes relate that he did), I cannot say. His defeat put an end to the Camp of Refuge; and, very soon afterwards, the King, victorious both in Scotland and in England, quelled the last rebellious English noble. He then surrounded himself with Norman lords, enriched by the property of English nobles; had a great survey made of all the land in England, which was entered as the property of its new owners, on a roll called Domesday Book; obliged the people to put out their fires and candles at a certain hour every night, on the ringing of a bell which was called The Curfew; introduced the Norman dresses and manners; made the Normans masters everywhere, and the English, servants; turned out the English bishops, and put Normans in their places; and showed himself to be the Conqueror indeed.

But, even with his own Normans, he had a restless life. They were always hungering and thirsting for the riches of the English; and the more he gave, the more they wanted. His

priests were as greedy as his soldiers. We know of only one Norman who plainly told his master, the King, that he had come with him to England to do his duty as a faithful servant, and that property taken by force from other men had no charms for him. His name was GUILBERT. We should not forget his name, for it is good to remember and to honour honest men.

Besides all these troubles, William the Conqueror was troubled by quarrels among his sons. He had three living. ROBERT, called CURT-HOSE, because of his short legs; WILLIAM, called RUFUS or the Red, from the colour of his hair; and HENRY, fond of learning, and called, in the Norman language, BEAULCERC, or Fine-Scholar. When Robert grew up, he asked of his father the government of Normandy, which he had nominally possessed, as a child, under his mother, MATILDA. The King refusing to grant it, Robert became jealous and discontented; and happening one day, while in this temper, to be ridiculed by his brothers, who threw water on him from a balcony as he was walking before the door, he drew his sword, rushed up-stairs, and was only prevented by the King himself from putting them to death. That same night, he hotly departed with some followers from his father's court, and endeavoured to take the Castle of Rouen by surprise. Failing in this, he shut himself up in another Castle in Normandy, which the King besieged, and where Robert one day unhorsed and nearly killed him without knowing who he was. His submission when he discovered his father, and the intercession of the queen and others, reconciled them; but not soundly; for Robert soon strayed abroad, and went from court to court with his complaints. He was a gay, careless, thoughtless fellow, spending all he got on musicians and dancers; but his mother loved him, and often, against the King's command, supplied him with money through a messenger named SAMSON. At length the incensed King swore he would tear out Samson's eyes; and Samson, thinking that his only hope of safety was in becoming a monk, became one, went on such errands no more, and kept his eyes in his head.

All this time, from the turbulent day of his strange coronation, the Conqueror had been struggling, you see, at any cost of cruelty and bloodshed, to maintain what he had seized. All his reign, he struggled still, with the same object ever before him. He was a stern bold man, and he succeeded in it.

He loved money, and was particular in his eating, but he had only leisure to indulge one other passion, and that was his love of hunting.

He carried it to such a height that he ordered whole villages and towns to be swept away to make forests for the deer. Not satisfied with sixty-eight Royal Forests, he laid waste an immense district, to form another in Hampshire, called the New Forest. The many thousands of miserable peasants who saw their little houses pulled down, and themselves and children turned into the open country without a shelter, detested him for his merciless addition to their many sufferings; and when, in the twenty-first year of his reign (which proved to be the last), he went over to Rouen, England was as full of hatred against him, as if every leaf on every tree in all his Royal Forests had been a curse upon his head. In the New Forest, his son Richard (for he had four sons) had been gored to death by a Stag; and the people said that this so cruelly-made Forest would yet be fatal to others of the Conqueror's race.

He was engaged in a dispute with the King of France about some territory. While he stayed at Rouen, negotiating with that King, he kept his bed and took medicines: being advised by his physicians to do so, on account of having grown to an unwieldy size. Word being brought to him that the King of France made light of this, and joked about it, he swore in a great rage that he should rue his jests. He assembled his army, marched into the disputed territory, burnt—his old way!—the vines, the crops, and fruit, and set the town of Mantes on fire. But, in an evil hour; for, as he rode over the hot ruins, his horse, setting his hoofs upon some burning embers, started, threw him forward against the pommel of the saddle, and gave him a mortal hurt. For six weeks he lay dying in a monastery near Rouen, and then made his will, giving England to William, Normandy to Robert, and five thousand pounds to Henry. And now, his violent deeds lay heavy on his mind. He ordered money to be given to many English churches and monasteries, and—which was much better repentance—released his prisoners of state, some of whom had been confined in his dungeons twenty years.

It was a September morning, and the sun was rising, when the King was awakened from slumber by the sound of a church bell. "What bell is that?" he faintly asked. They told him it was the bell of the chapel of Saint Mary. "I commend my soul," said he, "to Mary!" and died.

Think of his name, The Conqueror, and then consider how he lay in death! The moment he was dead, his physicians, priests, and nobles, not knowing what contest for the throne might now

take place, or what might happen in it, hastened away, each man for himself and his own property; the mercenary servants of the court began to rob and plunder; the body of the King, in the indecent strife, was rolled from the bed, and lay alone, for hours, upon the ground. O Conqueror, of whom so many great names are proud now, of whom so many great names thought nothing then, it were better to have conquered one true heart, than England!

By-and-by, the priests came creeping in with prayers and candles; and a good knight, named HERLUIN, undertook (which no one else would do) to convey the body to Caen, in Normandy, in order that it might be buried in St. Stephen's church there, which the Conqueror had founded. But fire, of which he had made such bad use in his life, seemed to follow him of itself in death. A great conflagration broke out in the town when the body was placed in the church; and those present running out to extinguish the flames, it was once again left alone.

It was not even buried in peace. It was about to be let down, in its Royal robes, into a tomb near the high altar, in presence of a great concourse of people, when a loud voice in the crowd cried out, "This ground is mine! Upon it, stood my father's house. This King despoiled me of both ground and house to build this church. In the great name of GOD, I here forbid his body to be covered with the earth that is my right!" The priests and bishops present, knowing the speaker's right, and knowing that the King had often denied him justice, paid him down sixty shillings for the grave. Even then, the corpse was not at rest. The tomb was too small, and they tried to force it in. It broke, a dreadful smell arose, the people hurried out into the air, and, for the third time, it was left alone.

Where were the Conqueror's three sons, that they were not at their father's burial? Robert was lounging among minstrels, dancers, and gamblers, in France or Germany. Henry was carrying his five thousand pounds safely away in a convenient chest he had got made. William the Red was hurrying to England, to lay hands upon the Royal treasure and the crown.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND UNDER WILLIAM THE SECOND, CALLED RUFUS.

WILLIAM THE RED, in breathless haste, secured the three great forts of Dover, Pevensey, and Hastings, and made with hot

speed for Winchester, where the Royal treasure was kept. The treasurer delivering him the keys, he found that it amounted to sixty thousand pounds in silver, besides gold and jewels. Possessed of this wealth, he soon persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury to crown him, and became William the Second, King of England.

Rufus was no sooner on the throne, than he ordered into prison again the unhappy state captives whom his father had set free, and directed a goldsmith to ornament his father's tomb profusely with gold and silver. It would have been more dutiful in him to have attended the sick Conqueror when he was dying; but England, itself, like this Red King, who once governed it, has sometimes made expensive tombs for dead men whom it treated shabbily when they were alive.

The King's brother, Robert of Normandy, seeming quite content to be only Duke of that country; and the King's other brother, Fine-Scholar, being quiet enough with his five thousand pounds in a chest; the King flattered himself, we may suppose, with the hope of an easy reign. But easy reigns were difficult to have in those days. The turbulent Bishop ODO (who had blessed the Norman army at the Battle of Hastings, and who, I dare say, took all the credit of the victory to himself) soon began, in concert with some powerful Norman nobles, to trouble the Red King.

The truth seems to be that this bishop and his friends, who had lands in England and lands in Normandy, wished to hold both under one Sovereign; and greatly preferred a thoughtless good-natured person, such as Robert was, to Rufus; who, though far from being an amiable man in any respect, was keen, and not to be imposed upon. They declared in Robert's favour, and retired to their castles (those castles were very troublesome to kings) in a sullen humour. The Red King, seeing the Normans thus falling from him, revenged himself upon them by appealing to the English; to whom he made a variety of promises, which he never meant to perform—in particular, promises to soften the cruelty of the Forest Laws; and who, in return, so aided him with their valour, that ODO was besieged in the Castle of Rochester, and forced to abandon it, and to depart from England for ever; whereupon the other rebellious Norman nobles were soon reduced and scattered.

Then, the Red King went over to Normandy, where the people suffered greatly under the loose rule of Duke Robert. The King's object

was to seize upon the Duke's dominions. This, the Duke, of course, prepared to resist; and miserable war between the two brothers seemed inevitable, when the powerful nobles on both sides, who had seen so much of war, interfered to prevent it. A treaty was made. Each of the two brothers agreed to give up something of his claims, and that the longer-liver of the two should inherit all the dominions of the other. When they had come to this loving understanding, they embraced and joined their forces against Fine-Scholar; who had bought some territory of Robert with a part of his five thousand pounds, and was considered a dangerous individual in consequence.

St. Michael's Mount, in Normandy (there is another St. Michael's Mount, in Cornwall, wonderfully like it), was then, as it is now, a strong place perched upon the top of a high rock, around which, when the tide is in, the sea flows, leaving no road to the mainland. In this place, Fine-Scholar shut himself up with his soldiers, and here he was closely besieged by his two brothers. At one time, when he was reduced to great distress for want of water, the generous Robert not only permitted his men to get water, but sent Fine-Scholar wine from his own table; and, on being remonstrated with by the Red King, said, "What! shall we let our own brother die of thirst? Where shall we get another, when he is gone?" At another time, the Red King riding alone on the shore of the bay, looking up at the Castle, was taken by two of Fine-Scholar's men, one of whom was about to kill him, when he cried out, "Hold, knave! I am the King of England!" The story says that the soldier raised him from the ground respectfully and humbly, and that the King took him into his service. The story may or may not be true; but at any rate it is true that Fine-Scholar could not hold out against his united brothers, and that he abandoned Mount St. Michael, and wandered about—as poor and forlorn as other scholars have been sometimes known to be.

The Scotch became unquiet in the Red King's time, and were twice defeated—the second time, with the loss of their King, Malcolm, and his son. The Welsh became unquiet too. Against them, Rufus was less successful; for they fought among their native mountains, and did great execution on the King's troops. Robert of Normandy became unquiet too; and complaining that his brother the King did not faithfully perform his part of their agreement, took up arms, and obtained assistance from the King of France, whom Rufus, in the end,

bought off with vast sums of money. England became unquiet too. Lord Mowbray, the powerful Earl of Northumberland, headed a great conspiracy to depose the King, and to place upon the throne, STEPHEN, the Conqueror's near relative. The plot was discovered; all the chief conspirators were seized; some were fined, some were put in prison, some were put to death. The Earl of Northumberland himself was shut up in a dungeon beneath Windsor Castle, where he died, an old man, thirty long years afterwards. The Priests in England were more unquiet than any other class or power; for the Red King treated them with such small ceremony that he refused to appoint new bishops or archbishops when the old ones died, but kept all the wealth belonging to those offices in his own hands. In return for this, the Priests wrote his life when he was dead, and abused him well. I am inclined to think, myself, that there was little to choose between the Priests and the Red King; that both sides were greedy and designing; and that they were fairly matched.

The Red King was false of heart, selfish, covetous, and mean. He had a worthy minister in his favourite, Ralph, nicknamed—for almost every famous person had a nickname in those rough days—Flambard, or the Firebrand. Once, the King being ill, became penitent, and made ANSELM, a foreign priest and a good man, Archbishop of Canterbury. But he no sooner got well again than he repented of his repentance, and persisted in wrongfully keeping to himself some of the wealth belonging to the archbishopric. This led to violent disputes, which were aggravated by there being in Rome at that time two rival Popes; each of whom declared he was the only real original infallible Pope, who couldn't make a mistake. At last, Anselm, knowing the Red King's character, and not feeling himself safe in England, asked leave to return abroad. The Red King gladly gave it; for he knew that as soon as Anselm was gone, he could begin to store up all the Canterbury money again, for his own use.

By such means, and by taxing and oppressing the English people in every possible way, the Red King became very rich. When he wanted money for any purpose, he raised it by some means or other, and cared nothing for the injustice he did, or the misery he caused. Having the opportunity of buying from Robert the whole duchy of Normandy for five years, he taxed the English people more than ever, and made the very convents sell their plate and valuables to supply him with the means to make the pur-

chase. But he was as quick and eager in putting down revolt as he was in raising money; for, a part of the Norman people objecting—very naturally, I think—to being sold in this way, he headed an army against them with all the speed and energy of his father. He was so impatient, that he embarked for Normandy in a great gale of wind. And when the sailors told him it was dangerous to go to sea in such angry weather, he replied, "Hoist sail and away! Did you ever hear of a king who was drowned?"

You will wonder how it was that even the careless Robert came to sell his dominions. It happened thus. It had long been the custom for many English people to make journeys to Jerusalem, which were called pilgrimages, in order that they might pray beside the tomb of Our Saviour there. Jerusalem belonging to the Turks, and the Turks hating Christianity, these Christian travellers were often insulted and ill-used. The pilgrims bore it patiently for some time, but at length a remarkable man, of great earnestness and eloquence, called PETER THE HERMIT, began to preach in various places against the Turks, and to declare that it was the duty of good Christians to drive away those unbelievers from the tomb of Our Saviour, and to take possession of it, and protect it. An excitement such as the world had never known before was created. Thousands and thousands of men of all ranks and conditions departed for Jerusalem to make war against the Turks. The war is called in history the first Crusade; and every Crusader wore a cross marked on his right shoulder.

All the Crusaders were not zealous Christians. Among them were vast numbers of the restless, idle, profligate, and adventurous spirits of the time. Some became Crusaders for the love of change; some, in the hope of plunder; some, because they had nothing to do at home; some, because they did what the priests told them; some, because they liked to see foreign countries; some, because they were fond of knocking men about, and would as soon knock a Turk about as a Christian. Robert of Normandy may have been influenced by all these motives; and by a kind desire, besides, to save the Christian Pilgrims from bad treatment in future. He wanted to raise a number of armed men, and to go to the Crusade. He could not do so without money. He had no money; and he sold his dominions to his brother, the Red King, for five years. With the large sum he thus obtained, he fitted out his Crusaders gallantly, and went away to Jerusalem in martial state. The Red King, who made money out of everything, stayed

at home, busily squeezing more money out of Normans and English.

After three years of great hardship and suffering—from shipwreck at sea; from travel in strange lands; from hunger, thirst, and fever, upon the burning sands of the desert; and from the fury of the Turks—the valiant Crusaders got possession of Our Saviour's tomb. The Turks were still resisting and fighting bravely, but this success increased the general desire in Europe to join the Crusade. Another great French Duke was proposing to sell his dominions for a term to the rich Red King, when the Red King's reign came to a sudden and violent end.

You have not forgotten the New Forest which the Conqueror made, and which the miserable people whose homes he had laid waste, so hated. The cruelty of the Forest Laws, and the torture and death they brought upon the peasantry, increased this hatred. The poor persecuted country people believed that the New Forest was enchanted. They said that in thunderstorms, and on dark nights, demons appeared, moving beneath the branches of the gloomy trees. They said that a terrible spectre had foretold to Norman hunters that the Red King should be punished there. And now, in the pleasant season of May, when the Red King had reigned almost thirteen years; and a second Prince of the Conqueror's blood—another Richard, the son of Duke Robert—was killed by an arrow in this dreaded Forest; the people said the second time was not the last, and that there was another death to come.

It was a lonely forest, accursed in the people's hearts for the wicked deeds that had been done to make it; and no man save the King and his Courtiers and Huntsmen, liked to stray there. But, in reality, it was like any other forest. In the spring, the green leaves broke out of the buds; in the summer, flourished heartily, and made deep shades; in the winter, shrivelled and blew down, and lay in brown heaps on the moss. Some trees were stately, and grew high and strong; some had fallen of themselves; some were felled by the forester's axe; some wore hollow, and the rabbits burrowed at their roots; some few were struck by lightning, and stood white and bare. There were hill-sides covered with rich fern, on which the morning dew so beautifully sparkled; there were brooks, where the deer went down to drink, or over which the whole herd bounded, flying from the arrows of the huntsmen; there were sunny glades, and solemn places where but little light came through the rustling leaves. The songs of the birds in the New Forest were pleasanter to

hear than the shouts of fighting men outside; and even when the Red King and his Court came hunting through its solitudes, cursing loud and riding hard, with a jingling of stirrups and bridles and knives and daggers, they did much less harm there than among the English or Normans, and the stags died (as they lived) far easier than the people.

Upon a day in August, the Red King, now reconciled to his brother, Fine-Scholar, came with a great train to hunt in the New Forest. Fine-Scholar was of the party. They were a merry party, and had lain all night at Malwood-Keep, a hunting-lodge in the forest, where they had made good cheer, both at supper and breakfast, and had drunk a deal of wine. The party dispersed in various directions, as the custom of hunters then was. The King took with him only SIR WALTER TYRREL, who was a famous sportsman, and to whom he had given, before they mounted horse that morning, two fine arrows.

The last time the King was ever seen alive, he was riding with Sir Walter Tyrrel, and their dogs were hunting together.

It was almost night, when a poor charcoal-burner, passing through the forest with his cart, came upon the solitary body of a dead man, shot with an arrow in the breast, and still bleeding. He got it into his cart. It was the body of the King. Shaken and tumbled, with its red beard all whitened with lime and clotted with blood, it was driven in the cart by the charcoal-burner next day to Winchester Cathedral, where it was received and buried.

Sir Walter Tyrrel, who escaped to Normandy, and claimed the protection of the King of France, swore in France that the Red King was suddenly shot dead by an arrow from an unseen hand, while they were hunting together; that he was fearful of being suspected as the King's murderer; and that he instantly set spurs to his horse, and fled to the sea-shore. Others declared that the King and Sir Walter Tyrrel were hunting in company, a little before sunset, standing in bushes opposite one another, when a stag came between them. That the King drew his bow and took aim, but the string broke. That the King then cried, "Shoot, Walter, in the Devil's name!" That Sir Walter shot. That the arrow glanced against a tree, was turned aside from the stag, and struck the King from his horse, dead.

By whose hand the Red King really fell, and whether that hand despatched the arrow to his breast by accident or by design, is only known to GOD. Some think his brother may have

caused him to be killed ; but the Red King had made so many enemies, both among priests and people, that suspicion may reasonably rest upon a less unnatural murderer. Men know no more than that he was found dead in the New Forest, which the suffering people had regarded as a doomed ground for his race.

CHAPTER X.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE FIRST, CALLED FINE-SCHOLAR.

FINE-SCHOLAR, on hearing of the Red King's death, hurried to Winchester with as much speed as Rufus himself had made, to seize the Royal treasure. But the keeper of the treasure, who had been one of the hunting-party in the Forest, made haste to Winchester too, and, arriving there at about the same time, refused to yield it up. Upon this, Fine-Scholar drew his sword, and threatened to kill the treasurer ; who might have paid for his fidelity with his life, but that he knew longer resistance to be useless when he found the Prince supported by a company of powerful barons, who declared they were determined to make him King. The treasurer, therefore, gave up the money and jewels of the Crown : and on the third day after the death of the Red King, being a Sunday, Fine-Scholar stood before the high altar in Westminster Abbey, and made a solemn declaration that he would resign the Church property which his brother had seized ; that he would do no wrong to the nobles ; and that he would restore to the people the laws of Edward the Confessor, with all the improvements of William the Conqueror. So began the reign of KING HENRY THE FIRST.

The people were attached to their new King, both because he had known distresses, and because he was an Englishman by birth and not a Norman. To strengthen this last hold upon them, the King wished to marry an English lady ; and could think of no other wife than MAUD THE GOOD, the daughter of the King of Scotland. Although this good Princess did not love the King, she was so affected by the representations the nobles made to her of the great charity it would be in her to unite the Norman and Saxon races, and prevent hatred and bloodshed between them for the future, that she consented to become his wife. After some disputing

among the priests, who said that as she had been in a convent in her youth, and had worn the veil of a nun, she could not lawfully be married—against which the Princess stated that her aunt, with whom she had lived in her youth, had indeed sometimes thrown a piece of black stuff over her, but for no other reason than because the nun's veil was the only dress the conquering Normans respected in girl or woman, and not because she had taken the vows of a nun, which she never had—she was declared free to marry, and was made King Henry's Queen. A good Queen she was ; beautiful, kind-hearted, and worthy of a better husband than the King.

For he was a cunning and unscrupulous man, though firm and clever. He cared very little for his word, and took any means to gain his ends. All this is shown in his treatment of his brother Robert—Robert, who had suffered him to be refreshed with water, and who had sent him the wine from his own table, when he was shut up, with the crows flying below him, parched with thirst, in the castle on the top of St. Michael's Mount, where his Red brother would have let him die.

Before the King began to deal with Robert, he removed and disgraced all the favourites of the late King ; who were for the most part base characters, much detested by the people. Flam-bard, or Firebrand, whom the late King had made Bishop of Durham, of all things in the world, Henry imprisoned in the Tower ; but Firebrand was a great joker and a jolly companion, and made himself so popular with his guards that they pretended to know nothing about a long rope that was sent into his prison at the bottom of a deep flagon of wine. The guards took the wine, and Firebrand took the rope ; with which, when they were fast asleep, he let himself down from a window in the night, and so got cleverly aboard ship and away to Normandy.

Now Robert, when his brother Fine-Scholar came to the throne, was still absent in the Holy Land. Henry pretended that Robert had been made Sovereign of that country ; and he had been away so long, that the ignorant people believed it. But, behold, when Henry had been some time King of England, Robert came home to Normandy ; having leisurely returned from Jerusalem through Italy, in which beautiful country he had enjoyed himself very much, and had married a lady as beautiful as itself ! In Normandy, he found Firebrand waiting to urge him to assert his claim to the English crown, and declare war against King Henry. This, after great loss of time in feasting and dancing

with his beautiful Italian wife among his Norman friends, he at last did.

The English in general were on King Henry's side, though many of the Normans were on Robert's. But the English sailors deserted the King, and took a great part of the English fleet over to Normandy; so that Robert came to invade this country in no foreign vessels, but in English ships. The virtuous Anselm, however, whom Henry had invited back from abroad, and made Archbishop of Canterbury, was steadfast in the King's cause; and it was so well supported that the two armies, instead of fighting, made a peace. Poor Robert, who trusted anybody and everybody, readily trusted his brother, the King; and agreed to go home and receive a pension from England, on condition that all his followers were fully pardoned. This the King very faithfully promised, but Robert was no sooner gone than he began to punish them.

Among them was the Earl of Shrewsbury, who, on being summoned by the King to answer to five-and-forty accusations, rode away to one of his strong castles, shut himself up therein, called around him his tenants and vassals, and fought for his liberty, but was defeated and banished. Robert, with all his faults, was so true to his word, that when he first heard of this nobleman having risen against his brother, he laid waste the Earl of Shrewsbury's estates in Normandy, to show the King that he would favour no breach of their treaty. Finding, on better information, afterwards, that the Earl's only crime was having been his friend, he came over to England, in his old thoughtless warm-hearted way, to intercede with the King, and remind him of the solemn promise to pardon all his followers.

This confidence might have put the false King to the blush, but it did not. Pretending to be very friendly, he so surrounded his brother with spies and traps, that Robert, who was quite in his power, had nothing for it but to renounce his pension and escape while he could. Getting home to Normandy, and understanding the King better now, he naturally allied himself with his old friend the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had still thirty castles in that country. This was exactly what Henry wanted. He immediately declared that Robert had broken the treaty, and next year invaded Normandy.

He pretended that he came to deliver the Normans, at their own request, from his brother's misrule. There is reason to fear that his misrule was bad enough; for his beautiful wife had died, leaving him with an infant son, and his court was again so careless, dissipated, and ill-regulated, that it was said he

sometimes lay in bed of a day for want of clothes to put on—his attendants having stolen all his dresses. But he headed his army like a brave prince and a gallant soldier, though he had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by King Henry, with four hundred of his Knights. Among them was poor harmless Edgar Atheling, who loved Robert well. Edgar was not important enough to be severe with. The King afterwards gave him a small pension, which he lived upon and died upon, in peace, among the quiet woods and fields of England.

And Robert—poor, kind, generous, wasteful, heedless Robert, with so many faults, and yet with virtues that might have made a better and a happier man—what was the end of him? If the King had had the magnanimity to say with a kind air, "Brother, tell me, before these noblemen, that from this time you will be my faithful follower and friend, and never raise your hand against me or my forces more!" he might have trusted Robert to the death. But the King was not a magnanimous man. He sentenced his brother to be confined for life in one of the Royal Castles. In the beginning of his imprisonment, he was allowed to ride out, guarded; but he one day broke away from his guard and galloped off. He had the evil fortune to ride into a swamp, where his horse stuck fast and he was taken. When the King heard of it he ordered him to be blinded, which was done by putting a red-hot metal basin on his eyes.

And so, in darkness and in prison, many years, he thought of all his past life, of the time he had wasted, of the treasure he had squandered, of the opportunities he had lost, of the youth he had thrown away, of the talents he had neglected. Sometimes, on fine autumn mornings, he would sit and think of the old hunting parties in the free Forest, where he had been the foremost and the gayest. Sometimes, in the still nights, he would wake, and mourn for the many nights that had stolen past him at the gaming-table; sometimes, would seem to hear, upon the melancholy wind, the old songs of the minstrels; sometimes, would dream, in his blindness, of the light and glitter of the Norman Court. Many and many a time, he groped back, in his fancy, to Jerusalem, where he had fought so well; or, at the head of his brave companions, bowed his feathered helmet to the shouts of welcome greeting him in Italy, and seemed again to walk among the sunny vineyards, or on the shore of the blue sea, with his lovely wife. And then, thinking of her grave, and of his fatherless boy, he would stretch out his solitary arms and weep.

At length, one day, there lay in prison, dead, with cruel and disfiguring scars upon his eyelids, bandaged from his jailer's sight, but on which the eternal Heavens looked down, a worn old man of eighty. He had once been Robert of Normandy. Pity him!

At the time when Robert of Normandy was taken prisoner by his brother, Robert's little son was only five years old. This child was taken, too, and carried before the King, sobbing and crying; for, young as he was, he knew he had good reason to be afraid of his Royal uncle. The King was not much accustomed to pity those who were in his power, but his cold heart seemed for the moment to soften towards the boy. He was observed to make a great effort, as if to prevent himself from being cruel, and ordered the child to be taken away; whereupon a certain Baron, who had married a daughter of Duke Robert's (by name, Helie of Saint Saen), took charge of him, tenderly. The King's gentleness did not last long. Before two years were over, he sent messengers to this lord's Castle to seize the child and bring him away. The Baron was not there at the time, but his servants were faithful, and carried the boy off in his sleep and hid him. When the Baron came home, and was told what the King had done, he took the child abroad, and leading him by the hand, went from King to King and from Court to Court, relating how the child had a claim to the throne of England, and how his uncle the King, knowing that he had that claim, would have murdered him, perhaps, but for his escape.

The youth and innocence of the pretty little WILLIAM FITZ-ROBERT (for that was his name) made him many friends at that time. When he became a young man, the King of France, uniting with the French Counts of Anjou and Flanders, supported his cause against the King of England, and took many of the King's towns and castles in Normandy. But, King Henry, artful and cunning always, bribed some of William's friends with money, some with promises, some with power. He bought off the Count of Anjou, by promising to marry his eldest son, also named WILLIAM, to the Count's daughter; and indeed the whole trust of this King's life was in such bargains, and he believed (as many another King has done since, and as one King did in France a very little time ago) that every man's truth and honour can be bought at some price. For all this, he was so afraid of William Fitz-Robert and his friends, that, for a long time, he believed his life to be in danger; and never lay down to sleep,

even in his palace surrounded by his guards, without having a sword and buckler at his bedside.

To strengthen his power, the King with great ceremony betrothed his eldest daughter MATILDA, then a child only eight years old, to be the wife of Henry the Fifth, the Emperor of Germany. To raise her marriage-portion, he taxed the English people in a most oppressive manner; then treated them to a great procession, to restore their good humour; and sent Matilda away, in fine state, with the German ambassadors, to be educated in the country of her future husband.

And now his Queen, Maud the Good, unhappily died. It was a sad thought for that gentle lady, that the only hope with which she had married a man whom she had never loved—the hope of reconciling the Norman and English races—had failed. At the very time of her death, Normandy and all France was in arms against England; for, so soon as his last danger was over, King Henry had been false to all the French powers he had promised, bribed, and bought, and they had naturally united against him. After some fighting, however, in which few suffered but the unhappy common people (who always suffered, whatsoever was the matter), he began to promise, bribe, and buy again; and by those means, and by the help of the Pope, who exerted himself to save more bloodshed, and by solemnly declaring, over and over again, that he really was in earnest this time, and would keep his word, the King made peace.

One of the first consequences of this peace was, that the King went over to Normandy with his son Prince William and a great retinue, to have the Prince acknowledged as his successor by the Norman Nobles, and to contract the promised marriage (this was one of the many promises the King had broken) between him and the daughter of the Count of Anjou. Both these things were triumphantly done, with great show and rejoicing; and on the twenty-fifth of November, in the year one thousand one hundred and twenty, the whole retinue prepared to embark at the Port of Barfleur, for the voyage home.

On that day, and at that place, there came to the King, Fitz-Stephen, a sea-captain, and said:

“My liege, my father served your father all his life, upon the sea. He steered the ship with the golden boy upon the prow, in which your father sailed to conquer England. I beseech you to grant me the same office. I have a fair vessel in the harbour here, called The White

Ship, manned by fifty sailors of renown. I pray you, Sire, to let your servant have the honour of steering you in The White Ship to England."

"I am sorry, friend," replied the King, "that my vessel is already chosen, and that I cannot (therefore) sail with the son of the man who served my father. But the Prince and all his company shall go along with you, in the fair White Ship, manned by the fifty sailors of renown."

An hour or two afterwards, the King set sail in the vessel he had chosen, accompanied by other vessels, and, sailing all night with a fair and gentle wind, arrived upon the coast of England in the morning. While it was yet night, the people in some of those ships heard a faint wild cry come over the sea, and wondered what it was.

Now, the Prince was a dissolute, debauched young man of eighteen, who bore no love to the English, and had declared that when he came to the throne he would yoke them to the plough like oxen. He went aboard The White Ship, with one hundred and forty youthful Nobles like himself, among whom were eighteen noble ladies of the highest rank. All this gay company, with their servants and the fifty sailors, made three hundred souls aboard the fair White Ship.

"Give three casks of wine, Fitz-Stephen," said the Prince, "to the fifty sailors of renown! My father the King has sailed out of the harbour. What time is there to make merry here, and yet reach England with the rest?"

"Prince," said Fitz-Stephen, "before morning, my fifty and The White Ship shall overtake the swiftest vessel in attendance on your father the King, if we sail at midnight!"

Then, the Prince commanded to make merry; and the sailors drank out the three casks of wine; and the Prince and all the noble company danced in the moonlight on the deck of The White Ship.

When, at last, she shot out of the harbour of Barfleur, there was not a sober seaman on board. But the sails were all set, and the oars all going merrily. Fitz-Stephen had the helm. The gay young nobles and the beautiful ladies, wrapped in mantles of various bright colours to protect them from the cold, talked, laughed, and sang. The Prince encouraged the fifty sailors to row harder yet, for the honour of The White Ship.

Crash! A terrific cry broke from three hundred hearts. It was the cry the people in the distant vessels of the King heard faintly on the water. The White Ship had struck upon a rock—was filling—going down!

Fitz-Stephen hurried the Prince into a boat, with some few Nobles. "Push off," he whispered; "and row to the land. It is not far, and the sea is smooth. The rest of us must die."

But, as they rowed away, fast, from the sinking ship, the Prince heard the voice of his sister MARIE, the Countess of Perche, calling for help. He never in his life had been so good as he was then. He cried in an agony, "Row back at any risk! I cannot bear to leave her!"

They rowed back. As the Prince held out his arms to catch his sister, such numbers leaped in, that the boat was upset. And in the same instant The White Ship went down.

Only two men floated. They both clung to the main yard of the ship, which had broken from the mast, and now supported them. One asked the other who he was? He said, "I am a nobleman, GODEVY by name, the son of GILBERT DE L'AIGLE. And you?" said he. "I am BEROLD, a poor butcher of Rouen," was the answer. Then, they said together, "Lord be merciful to us both!" and tried to encourage one another, as they drifted in the cold benumbing sea on that unfortunate November night.

By-and-by, another man came swimming towards them, whom they knew, when he pushed aside his long wet hair, to be Fitz-Stephen. "Where is the Prince?" said he. "Gone! Gone!" the two cried together. "Neither he, nor his brother, nor his sister, nor the King's niece, nor her brother, nor any one of all the brave three hundred, noble or commoner, except we three, has risen above the water!" Fitz-Stephen, with a ghastly face, cried, "Woe! woe, to me!" and sunk to the bottom.

The other two clung to the yard for some hours. At length the young noble said faintly, "I am exhausted, and chilled with the cold, and can hold no longer. Farewell, good friend! God preserve you!" So, he dropped and sunk; and of all the brilliant crowd, the poor Butcher of Rouen alone was saved. In the morning some fishermen saw him floating in his sheepskin coat, and got him into their boat—the sole relater of the dismal tale.

For three days, no one dared to carry the intelligence to the King. At length, they sent into his presence a little boy, who, weeping bitterly, and kneeling at his feet, told him that The White Ship was lost with all on board. The King fell to the ground like a dead man, and never, never afterwards was seen to smile.

But he plotted again, and promised again, and bribed and bought again, in his old deceitful way. Having no son to succeed him, after all

his pains ("The Prince will never yoke us to the plough, now!" said the English people), he took a second wife—ADELAIS or ALICE, a duke's daughter, and the Pope's niece. Having no more children, however, he proposed to the Barons to swear that they would recognise as his successor, his daughter Matilda, whom, as she was now a widow, he married to the eldest son of the Count of Anjou, GEOFFREY, surnamed PLANTAGENET, from a custom he had of wearing a sprig of flowering broom (called *Genêt* in French) in his cap for a feather. As one false man usually makes many, and as a false King, in particular, is pretty certain to make a false Court, the Barons took the oath about the succession of Matilda (and her children after her), twice over, without in the least intending to keep it. The King was now relieved from any remaining fears of William Fitz-Robert, by his death in the Monastery of St. Omer, in France, at twenty-six years old, of a pike-wound in the hand. And as Matilda gave birth to three sons, he thought the succession to the throne secure.

He spent most of the latter part of his life, which was troubled by family quarrels, in Normandy, to be near Matilda. When he had reigned upwards of thirty-five years, and was sixty-seven years old, he died of an indigestion and fever, brought on by eating, when he was far from well, of a fish called Lamprey, against which he had often been cautioned by his physicians. His remains were brought over to Reading Abbey to be buried.

You may perhaps hear the cunning and promise-breaking of King Henry the First, called "policy" by some people, and "diplomacy" by others. Neither of these fine words will in the least mean that it was true; and nothing that is not true can possibly be good.

His greatest merit, that I know of, was his love of learning. I should have given him greater credit even for that, if it had been strong enough to induce him to spare the eyes of a certain poet he once took prisoner, who was a knight besides. But he ordered the poet's eyes to be torn from his head, because he had laughed at him in his verses; and the poet, in the pain of that torture, dashed out his own brains against his prison wall. King Henry the First was avaricious, revengeful, and so false, that I suppose a man never lived whose word was less to be relied upon.

CHAPTER XI.

ENGLAND UNDER MATILDA AND STEPHEN.

THE King was no sooner dead than all the plans and schemes he had laboured at so long, and lied so much for, crumbled away like a hollow heap of sand. STEPHEN, whom he had never mistrusted or suspected, started up to claim the throne.

Stephen was the son of ADELA, the Conqueror's daughter, married to the Count of Blois. To Stephen, and to his brother HENRY, the late King had been liberal; making Henry Bishop of Winchester, and finding a good marriage for Stephen, and much enriching him. This did not prevent Stephen from hastily producing a false witness, a servant of the late King, to swear that the King had named him for his heir upon his death-bed. On this evidence the Archbishop of Canterbury crowned him. The new King, so suddenly made, lost not a moment in seizing the Royal treasure, and hiring foreign soldiers with some of it to protect his throne.

If the dead King had even done as the false witness said, he would have had small right to will away the English people, like so many sheep and oxen, without their consent. But he had, in fact, bequeathed all his territory to Matilda; who, supported by ROBERT, Earl of Gloucester, soon began to dispute the crown. Some of the powerful barons and priests took her side; some took Stephen's; all fortified their castles; and again the miserable English people were involved in war, from which they could never derive advantage whosoever was victorious, and in which all parties plundered, tortured, starved, and ruined them.

Five years had passed since the death of Henry the First—and during those five years there had been two terrible invasions by the people of Scotland under their King, David, who was at last defeated with all his army—when Matilda, attended by her brother Robert and a large force, appeared in England to maintain her claim. A battle was fought between her troops and King Stephen's at Lincoln; in which the King himself was taken prisoner, after bravely fighting until his battle-axe and sword were broken, and was carried into strict confinement at Gloucester. Matilda then submitted herself to the Priests, and the Priests crowned her Queen of England.

She did not long enjoy this dignity. The people of London had a great affection for Stephen; many of the Barons considered it

degrading to be ruled by a woman; and the Queen's temper was so haughty that she made innumerable enemies. The people of London revolted; and, in alliance with the troops of Stephen, besieged her at Winchester, where they took her brother Robert prisoner, whom, as her best soldier and chief general, she was glad to exchange for Stephen himself, who thus regained his liberty. Then, the long war went on afresh. Once, she was pressed so hard in

the Castle of Oxford, in the winter weather when the snow lay thick upon the ground, that her only chance of escape was to dress herself all in white, and, accompanied by no more than three faithful Knights, dressed in like manner that their figures might not be seen from Stephen's camp as they passed over the snow, to steal away on foot, cross the frozen Thames, walk a long distance, and at last gallop away on horseback. All this she did, but to no great



THE ESCAPE OF QUEEN MATILDA FROM OXFORD CASTLE.

purpose then; for her brother dying while the struggle was yet going on, she at last withdrew to Normandy.

In two or three years after her withdrawal her cause appeared in England, afresh, in the person of her son Henry, young Plantagenet, who, at only eighteen years of age, was very powerful: not only on account of his mother having resigned all Normandy to him, but also from his having married ELEANOR, the divorced wife of the French King, a bad woman, who had great possessions in France. Louis, the

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French King, not relishing this arrangement, helped EUSTACE, King Stephen's son, to invade Normandy: but Henry drove their united forces out of that country, and then returned here, to assist his partisans, whom the King was then besieging at Wallingford upon the Thames. Here, for two days, divided only by the river, the two armies lay encamped opposite to one another—on the eve, as it seemed to all men, of another desperate fight, when the EARL OF ARUNDEL took heart and said "that it was not reasonable to prolong the unspeakable miseries

of two kingdoms to minister to the ambition of two princes."

Many other noblemen repeating and supporting this when it was once uttered, Stephen and young Plantagenet went down, each to his own bank of the river, and held a conversation across it, in which they arranged a truce; very much to the dissatisfaction of Eustace, who swaggered away with some followers, and laid violent hands on the Abbey of St. Edmund's-Bury, where he presently died mad. The truce led to a solemn council at Winchester, in which it was agreed that Stephen should retain the crown, on condition of his declaring Henry his successor; that WILLIAM, another son of the King's, should inherit his father's rightful possessions; and that all the Crown lands which Stephen had given away should be recalled, and all the Castles he had permitted to be built demolished. Thus terminated the bitter war, which had now lasted fifteen years, and had again laid England waste. In the next year STEPHEN died, after a troubled reign of nineteen years.

Although King Stephen was, for the time in which he lived, a humane and moderate man, with many excellent qualities; and although nothing worse is known of him than his usurpation of the Crown, which he probably excused to himself by the consideration that King Henry the First was an usurper too—which was no excuse at all; the people of England suffered more in these dread nineteen years, than at any former period even of their suffering history. In the division of the nobility between the two rival claimants of the Crown, and in the growth of what is called the Feudal System (which made the peasants the born vassals and mere slaves of the Barons), every Noble had his strong Castle, where he reigned the cruel king of all the neighbouring people. Accordingly, he perpetrated whatever cruelties he chose. And never were worse cruelties committed upon earth than in wretched England in those nineteen years.

The writers who were living then describe them fearfully. They say that the castles were filled with devils rather than with men; that the peasants, men and women, were put into dungeons for their gold and silver, were tortured with fire and smoke, were hung up by the thumbs, were hung up by the heels with great weights to their heads, were torn with jagged irons, killed with hunger, broken to death in narrow chests filled with sharp-pointed stones, murdered in countless fiendish ways. In England there was no corn, no meat, no cheese, no butter, there were no tilled lands, no harvests.

Ashes of burnt towns, and dreary wastes, were all that the traveller, fearful of the robbers who prowled abroad at all hours, would see in a long day's journey; and from sunrise until night, he would not come upon a home.

The clergy sometimes suffered, and heavily too, from pillage, but many of them had castles of their own, and fought in helmet and armour like the barons, and drew lots with other fighting men for their share of booty. The Pope (or Bishop of Rome), on King Stephen's resisting his ambition, laid England under an Interdict at one period of this reign; which means that he allowed no service to be performed in the churches, no couples to be married, no bells to be rung, no dead bodies to be buried. Any man having the power to refuse these things, no matter whether he were called a Pope or a Poulterer, would, of course, have the power of afflicting numbers of innocent people. That nothing might be wanting to the miseries of King Stephen's time, the Pope threw in this contribution to the public store—not very like the widow's contribution, as I think, when Our Saviour sat in Jerusalem over-against the Treasury, "and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing."

CHAPTER XII.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE SECOND.

PART THE FIRST.

HENRY PLANTAGENET, when he was but twenty-one years old, quietly succeeded to the throne of England, according to his agreement made with the late King at Winchester. Six weeks after Stephen's death, he and his Queen, Eleanor, were crowned in that city; into which they rode on horseback in great state, side by side, amidst much shouting and rejoicing, and clashing of music, and strewing of flowers.

The reign of King Henry the Second began well. The King had great possessions, and (what with his own rights, and what with those of his wife) was lord of one-third part of France. He was a young man of vigour, ability, and resolution, and immediately applied himself to remove some of the evils which had arisen in the last unhappy reign. He revoked all the grants of land that had been hastily made, on either side, during the late struggles; he obliged numbers of disorderly soldiers to depart from England; he reclaimed all the castles belong-

ing to the Crown; and he forced the wicked nobles to pull down their own castles, to the number of eleven hundred, in which such dismal cruelties had been inflicted on the people. The King's brother, GEOFFREY, rose against him in France, while he was so well employed, and rendered it necessary for him to repair to that country; where, after he had subdued and made a friendly arrangement with his brother (who did not live long), his ambition to increase his possessions involved him in a war with the French King, Louis, with whom he had been on such friendly terms just before, that to the French King's infant daughter, then a baby in the cradle, he had promised one of his little sons in marriage, who was a child of five years old. However, the war came to nothing at last, and the Pope made the two Kings friends again.

Now, the clergy, in the troubles of the last reign, had gone on very ill indeed. There were all kinds of criminals among them—murderers, thieves, and vagabonds; and the worst of the matter was, that the good priests would not give up the bad priests to justice, when they committed crimes, but persisted in sheltering and defending them. The King, well knowing that there could be no peace or rest in England while such things lasted, resolved to reduce the power of the clergy; and, when he had reigned seven years, found (as he considered) a good opportunity for doing so, in the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury. "I will have for the new Archbishop," thought the King, "a friend in whom I can trust, who will help me to humble these rebellious priests, and to have them dealt with, when they do wrong, as other men who do wrong are dealt with." So, he resolved to make his favourite, the new Archbishop; and this favourite was so extraordinary a man, and his story is so curious, that I must tell you all about him.

Once upon a time, a worthy merchant of London, named GILBERT À BECKET, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and was taken prisoner by a Saracen lord. This lord, who treated him kindly and not like a slave, had one fair daughter, who fell in love with the merchant; and who told him that she wanted to become a Christian, and was willing to marry him if they could fly to a Christian country. The merchant returned her love, until he found an opportunity to escape, when he did not trouble himself about the Saracen lady, but escaped with his servant Richard, who had been taken prisoner along with him, and arrived in England and forgot her. The Saracen lady, who was more loving than

the merchant, left her father's house in disguise to follow him, and made her way, under many hardships, to the sea-shore. The merchant had taught her only two English words (for I suppose he must have learnt the Saracen tongue himself, and made love in that language), of which LONDON was one, and his own name, GILBERT, the other. She went among the ships, saying, "London! London!" over and over again, until the sailors understood that she wanted to find an English vessel that would carry her there; so they showed her such a ship, and she paid for her passage with some of her jewels, and sailed away. Well! The merchant was sitting in his counting-house in London one day, when he heard a great noise in the street; and presently Richard came running in from the warehouse, with his eyes wide open and his breath almost gone, saying, "Master, master, here is the Saracen lady!" The merchant thought Richard was mad; but Richard said, "No, master! As I live, the Saracen lady is going up and down the city, calling Gilbert! Gilbert!" Then, he took the merchant by the sleeve, and pointed out at window; and there they saw her among the gables and water-spouts of the dark dirty street, in her foreign dress, so forlorn, surrounded by a wondering crowd, and passing slowly along, calling Gilbert, Gilbert! When the merchant saw her, and thought of the tenderness she had shown him in his captivity, and of her constancy, his heart was moved, and he ran down into the street; and she saw him coming, and with a great cry fainted in his arms. They were married without loss of time, and Richard (who was an excellent man) danced with joy the whole day of the wedding; and they all lived happy ever afterwards.

This merchant and this Saracen lady had one son, THOMAS À BECKET. He it was who became the Favourite of King Henry the Second.

He had become Chancellor, when the King thought of making him Archbishop. He was clever, gay, well educated, brave; had fought in several battles in France; had defeated a French knight in single combat, and brought his horse away as a token of the victory. He lived in a noble palace, he was the tutor of the young Prince Henry, he was served by one hundred and forty knights, his riches were immense. The King once sent him as his ambassador to France; and the French people, beholding in what state he travelled, cried out in the streets, "How splendid must the King of England be, when this is only the Chancellor!" They had good reason to wonder at the magnificence of

Thomas à Becket, for, when he entered a French town, his procession was headed by two hundred and fifty singing boys; then, came his hounds in couples; then, eight waggons, each drawn by five horses driven by five drivers; two of the waggons filled with strong ale to be given away to the people; four, with his gold and silver plate and stately clothes; two, with the dresses of his numerous servants. Then, came twelve horses, each with a monkey on his back; then, a train of people bearing shields and leading fine war-horses splendidly equipped; then, falconers with hawks upon their wrists; then, a host of knights, and gentlemen and priests; then, the Chancellor with his brilliant garments flashing in the sun, and all the people capering and shouting with delight.

The King was well pleased with all this, thinking that it only made himself the more magnificent to have so magnificent a favourite; but he sometimes jested with the Chancellor upon his splendour too. Once, when they were riding together through the streets of London in hard winter weather, they saw a shivering old man in rags. "Look at the poor object!" said the King. "Would it not be a charitable act to give that aged man a comfortable warm cloak?" "Undoubtedly it would," said Thomas à Becket, "and you do well, Sir, to think of such Christian duties." "Come!" cried the King, "then give him your cloak!" It was made of rich crimson trimmed with ermine. The King tried to pull it off, the Chancellor tried to keep it on, both were near rolling from their saddles in the mud, when the Chancellor submitted, and the King gave the cloak to the old beggar: much to the beggar's astonishment, and much to the merriment of all the courtiers in attendance. For, courtiers are not only eager to laugh when the King laughs, but they really do enjoy a laugh against a favourite.

"I will make," thought King Henry the Second, "this Chancellor of mine, Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. He will then be the head of the Church, and, being devoted to me, will help me to correct the Church. He has always upheld my power against the power of the clergy, and once publicly told some bishops (I remember), that men of the Church were equally bound to me with men of the sword. Thomas à Becket is the man, of all other men in England, to help me in my great design." So the King, regardless of all objection, either that he was a fighting man, or a lavish man, or a courtly man, or a man of pleasure, or anything but a likely man for the office, made him Archbishop accordingly.

Now, Thomas à Becket was proud and loved to be famous. He was already famous for the pomp of his life, for his riches, his gold and silver plate, his waggons, horses, and attendants. He could do no more in that way than he had done; and being tired of that kind of fame (which is a very poor one), he longed to have his name celebrated for something else. Nothing, he knew, would render him so famous in the world, as the setting of his utmost power and ability against the utmost power and ability of the King. He resolved with the whole strength of his mind to do it.

He may have had some secret grudge against the King besides. The King may have offended his proud humour at some time or other, for anything I know. I think it likely, because it is a common thing for Kings, Princes, and other great people, to try the tempers of their favourites rather severely. Even the little affair of the crimson cloak must have been anything but a pleasant one to a haughty man. Thomas à Becket knew better than any one in England what the King expected of him. In all his sumptuous life, he had never yet been in a position to disappoint the King. He could take up that proud stand now, as head of the Church; and he determined that it should be written in history, either that he subdued the King, or that the King subdued him.

So, of a sudden, he completely altered the whole manner of his life. He turned off all his brilliant followers, ate coarse food, drank bitter water, wore next his skin sackcloth covered with dirt and vermin (for it was then thought very religious to be very dirty), flogged his back to punish himself, lived chiefly in a little cell, washed the feet of thirteen poor people every day, and looked as miserable as he possibly could. If he had put twelve hundred monkeys on horseback instead of twelve, and had gone in procession with eight thousand waggons instead of eight, he could not have half astonished the people so much as by this great change. It soon caused him to be more talked about as an Archbishop than he had been as a Chancellor.

The King was very angry; and was made still more so, when the new Archbishop, claiming various estates from the nobles as being rightfully Church property, required the King himself, for the same reason, to give up Rochester Castle, and Rochester City too. Not satisfied with this, he declared that no power but himself should appoint a priest to any Church in the part of England over which he was Archbishop; and when a certain gentleman of Kent made such an appointment, as he claimed to have the

right to do, Thomas à Becket excommunicated him.

Excommunication was, next to the Interdict I told you of at the close of the last chapter, the great weapon of the clergy. It consisted in declaring the person who was excommunicated, an outcast from the Church and from all religious offices; and in cursing him all over, from the top of his head to the sole of his foot, whether he was standing up, lying down, sitting, kneeling, walking, running, hopping, jumping, gaping, coughing, sneezing, or whatever else he was doing. This unchristian nonsense would of course have made no sort of difference to the person cursed—who could say his prayers at home if he were shut out of church, and whom none but GOD could judge—but for the fears and superstitions of the people, who avoided excommunicated persons, and made their lives unhappy. So, the King said to the New Archbishop, “Take off this Excommunication from this gentleman of Kent.” To which the Archbishop replied, “I shall do no such thing.”

The quarrel went on. A priest in Worcestershire committed a most dreadful murder, that aroused the horror of the whole nation. The King demanded to have this wretch delivered up, to be tried in the same court and in the same way as any other murderer. The Archbishop refused, and kept him in the Bishop's prison. The King, holding a solemn assembly in Westminster Hall, demanded that in future all priests found guilty before their Bishops of crimes against the law of the land should be considered priests no longer, and should be delivered over to the law of the land for punishment. The Archbishop again refused. The King required to know whether the clergy would obey the ancient customs of the country? Every priest there, but one, said, after Thomas à Becket, “Saving my order.” This really meant that they would only obey those customs when they did not interfere with their own claims; and the King went out of the Hall in great wrath.

Some of the clergy began to be afraid, now, that they were going too far. Though Thomas à Becket was otherwise as unmoved as Westminster Hall, they prevailed upon him, for the sake of their fears, to go to the King at Woodstock, and promise to observe the ancient customs of the country, without saying anything about his order. The King received this submission favourably, and summoned a great council of the clergy to meet at the Castle of Clarendon, by Salisbury. But when the council met, the Archbishop again insisted on the words “saving my order;” and he still insisted, though

lords entreated him, and priests wept before him and knelt to him, and an adjoining room was thrown open, filled with armed soldiers of the King, to threaten him. At length he gave way, for that time, and the ancient customs (which included what the King had demanded in vain) were stated in writing, and were signed and sealed by the chief of the clergy, and were called the Constitutions of Clarendon.

The quarrel went on, for all that. The Archbishop tried to see the King. The King would not see him. The Archbishop tried to escape from England. The sailors on the coast would launch no boat to take him away. Then, he again resolved to do his worst in opposition to the King, and began openly to set the ancient customs at defiance.

The King summoned him before a great council at Northampton, where he accused him of high treason, and made a claim against him, which was not a just one, for an enormous sum of money. Thomas à Becket was alone against the whole assembly, and the very Bishops advised him to resign his office and abandon his contest with the King. His great anxiety and agitation stretched him on a sick-bed for two days, but he was still undaunted. He went to the adjourned council, carrying a great cross in his right hand, and sat down holding it erect before him. The King angrily retired into an inner room. The whole assembly angrily retired and left him there. But there he sat. The Bishops came out again in a body, and renounced him as a traitor. He only said, “I hear!” and sat there still. They retired again into the inner room, and his trial proceeded without him. By-and-by, the Earl of Leicester, heading the barons, came out to read his sentence. He refused to hear it, denied the power of the court, and said he would refer his cause to the Pope. As he walked out of the hall, with the cross in his hand, some of those present picked up rushes—rushes were strewn upon the floors in those days by way of carpet—and threw them at him. He proudly turned his head, and said that were he not Archbishop, he would chastise those cowards with the sword he had known how to use in bygone days. He then mounted his horse, and rode away, cheered and surrounded by the common people, to whom he threw open his house that night and gave a supper, supping with them himself. That same night he secretly departed from the town; and so, travelling by night and hiding by day, and calling himself “Brother Dearman,” got away, not without difficulty, to Flanders.

The struggle still went on. The angry King

took possession of the revenues of the archbishopric, and banished all the relations and servants of Thomas à Becket, to the number of four hundred. The Pope and the French King both protected him, and an abbey was assigned for his residence. Stimulated by this support, Thomas à Becket, on a great festival day, formally proceeded to a great church crowded with people, and going up into the pulpit publicly cursed and excommunicated all who had supported the Constitutions of Clarendon: mentioning many English noblemen by name, and not distantly hinting at the King of England himself.

When intelligence of this new affront was carried to the King in his chamber, his passion was so furious that he tore his clothes, and rolled like a madman on his bed of straw and rushes. But he was soon up and doing. He ordered all the ports and coasts of England to be narrowly watched, that no letters of Interdict might be brought into the kingdom; and sent messengers and bribes to the Pope's palace at Rome. Meanwhile, Thomas à Becket, for his part, was not idle at Rome, but constantly employed his utmost arts in his own behalf. Thus the contest stood, until there was peace between France and England (which had been for some time at war), and until the two children of the two Kings were married in celebration of it. Then, the French King brought about a meeting between Henry and his old favourite, so long his enemy.

Even then, though Thomas à Becket knelt before the King, he was obstinate and immovable as to those words about his order. King Louis of France was weak enough in his veneration for Thomas à Becket and such men, but this was a little too much for him. He said that à Becket "wanted to be greater than the saints and better than St. Peter," and rode away from him with the King of England. His poor French Majesty asked à Becket's pardon for so doing, however, soon afterwards, and cut a very pitiful figure.

At last, and after a world of trouble, it came to this. There was another meeting on French ground between King Henry and Thomas à Becket, and it was agreed that Thomas à Becket should be Archbishop of Canterbury, according to the customs of former Archbishops, and that the King should put him in possession of the revenues of that post. And now, indeed, you might suppose the struggle at an end, and Thomas à Becket at rest. No, not even yet. For Thomas à Becket hearing, by some means, that King Henry, when he was in dread of his kingdom being placed under an interdict, had

had his eldest son Prince Henry secretly crowned, not only persuaded the Pope to suspend the Archbishop of York who had performed that ceremony, and to excommunicate the Bishops who had assisted at it, but sent a messenger of his own into England, in spite of all the King's precautions along the coast, who delivered the letters of excommunication into the Bishops' own hands. Thomas à Becket then came over to England himself, after an absence of seven years. He was privately warned that it was dangerous to come, and that an ireful knight, named RANULF DE BROC, had threatened that he should not live to eat a loaf of bread in England; but he came.

The common people received him well, and marched about with him in a soldierly way, armed with such rustic weapons as they could get. He tried to see the young prince who had once been his pupil, but was prevented. He hoped for some little support among the nobles and priests, but found none. He made the most of the peasants who attended him, and feasted them, and went from Canterbury to Harrow-on-the-Hill, and from Harrow-on-the-Hill back to Canterbury, and on Christmas Day preached in the Cathedral there, and told the people in his sermon that he had come to die among them, and that it was likely he would be murdered. He had no fear, however—or, if he had any, he had much more obstinacy—for he, then and there, excommunicated three of his enemies, of whom Ranulf de Broc the ireful knight was one.

As men in general had no fancy for being cursed, in their sitting and walking, and gaping and sneezing, and all the rest of it, it was very natural in the persons so freely excommunicated to complain to the King. It was equally natural in the King, who had hoped that this troublesome opponent was at last quieted, to fall into a mighty rage when he heard of these new affronts; and, on the Archbishop of York telling him that he never could hope for rest whilst Thomas à Becket lived, to cry out hastily before his court, "Have I no one here who will deliver me from this man?" There were four knights present, who, hearing the King's words, looked at one another, and went out.

The names of these knights were REGINALD FITZURSE, WILLIAM TRACY, HUGH DE MORVILLE, and RICHARD BRITO; three of whom had been in the train of Thomas à Becket in the old days of his splendour. They rode away on horseback, in a very secret manner, and on the third day after Christmas Day arrived at Saltwood House, not far from Canterbury, which belonged

to the family of Ranulf de Broc. They quietly collected some followers here, in case they should need any; and proceeding to Canterbury, suddenly appeared (the four knights and twelve men) before the Archbishop, in his own house, at two o'clock in the afternoon. They neither bowed nor spoke, but sat down on the floor in silence, staring at the Archbishop.

Thomas à Becket said, at length, "What do you want?"

"We want," said Reginald Fitzurse, "the excommunication taken from the Bishops, and you to answer for your offences to the King."

Thomas à Becket defiantly replied, that the power of the clergy was above the power of the King. That it was not for such men as they were, to threaten him. That if he were threatened by all the swords in England, he would never yield.

"Then we will do more than threaten!" said the knights. And they went out with the twelve men, and put on their armour, and drew their shining swords, and came back.

His servants, in the meantime, had shut up and barred the great gate of the palace. At first, the knights tried to shatter it with their battle-axes; but, being shown a window by which they could enter, they let the gate alone, and climbed in that way. While they were battering at the door, the attendants of Thomas à Becket had implored him to take refuge in the Cathedral; in which, as a sanctuary or sacred place, they thought the knights would dare to do no violent deed. He told them, again and again, that he would not stir. Hearing the distant voices of the monks singing the evening service, however, he said it was now his duty to attend, and therefore, and for no other reason, he would go.

There was a near way between his Palace and the Cathedral, by some beautiful old cloisters which you may yet see. He went into the Cathedral, without any hurry, and having the Cross carried before him as usual. When he was safely there, his servants would have fastened the door, but he said No! it was the house of God and not a fortress.

As he spoke, the shadow of Reginald Fitzurse appeared in the Cathedral doorway, darkening the little light there was outside, on the dark winter evening. This knight said, in a strong voice, "Follow me, loyal servants of the King!" The rattle of the armour of the other knights echoed through the Cathedral, as they came clashing in.

It was so dark, in the lofty aisles and among the stately pillars of the church, and there were

so many hiding-places in the crypt below and in the narrow passages above, that Thomas à Becket might even at that pass have saved himself if he would. But he would not. He told the monks resolutely that he would not. And though they all dispersed and left him there with no other follower than EDWARD GRYPE, his faithful cross-bearer, he was as firm then, as ever he had been in his life.

The knights came on, through the darkness, making a terrible noise with their armed tread upon the stone pavement of the church. "Where is the traitor?" they cried out. He made no answer. But when they cried, "Where is the Archbishop?" he said proudly, "I am here!" and came out of the shade and stood before them.

The knights had no desire to kill him, if they could rid the King and themselves of him by any other means. They told him he must either fly or go with them. He said he would do neither; and he threw William Tracy off with such force when he took hold of his sleeve, that Tracy reeled again. By his reproaches and his steadiness, he so incensed them, and exasperated their fierce humour, that Reginald Fitzurse, whom he called by an ill name, said, "Then die!" and struck at his head. But the faithful Edward Grype put out his arm, and there received the main force of the blow, so that it only made his master bleed. Another voice from among the knights again called to Thomas à Becket to fly; but, with his blood running down his face, and his hands clasped, and his head bent, he commended himself to God, and stood firm. Then they cruelly killed him close to the altar of St. Bennet; and his body fell upon the pavement, which was dirtied with his blood and brains.

It is an awful thing to think of the murdered mortal, who had so showered his curses about, lying, all disfigured, in the church, where a few lamps here and there were but red specks on a pall of darkness; and to think of the guilty knights riding away on horseback, looking over their shoulders at the dim Cathedral, and remembering what they had left inside.

PART THE SECOND.

WHEN the King heard how Thomas à Becket had lost his life in Canterbury Cathedral, through the ferocity of the four Knights, he was filled with dismay. Some have supposed that when the King spoke those hasty words, "Have I no one here who will deliver me from this man?" he wished, and meant à Becket to be slain. But few things are more unlikely; for,

besides that the King was not naturally cruel (though very passionate), he was wise, and must have known full well what any stupid man in his dominions must have known, namely, that such a murder would rouse the Pope and the whole Church against him.

He sent respectful messengers to the Pope, to represent his innocence (except in having uttered the hasty words); and he swore solemnly and publicly to his innocence, and contrived in time to make his peace. As to the four guilty Knights, who fled into Yorkshire, and never again dared to show themselves at Court, the Pope excommunicated them; and they lived miserably for some time, shunned by all their countrymen. At last, they went humbly to Jerusalem as a penance, and there died and were buried.

It happened, fortunately for the pacifying of the Pope, that an opportunity arose very soon after the murder of à Becket, for the King to declare his power in Ireland—which was an acceptable undertaking to the Pope, as the Irish, who had been converted to Christianity by one Patricius (otherwise Saint Patrick) long ago, before any Pope existed, considered that the Pope had nothing at all to do with them, or they with the Pope, and accordingly refused to pay him Peter's Pence, or that tax of a penny a house which I have elsewhere mentioned. The King's opportunity arose in this way.

The Irish were, at that time, as barbarous a people as you can well imagine. They were continually quarrelling and fighting, cutting one another's throats, slicing one another's noses, burning one another's houses, carrying away one another's wives, and committing all sorts of violence. The country was divided into five kingdoms—DESMOND, THOMOND, CONNAUGHT, ULSTER, and LEINSTER—each governed by a separate King, of whom one claimed to be the chief of the rest. Now, one of these Kings, named DERMOND MAC MURROUGH (a wild kind of name, spelt in more than one wild kind of way), had carried off the wife of a friend of his, and concealed her on an island in a bog. The friend resenting this (though it was quite the custom of the country), complained to the chief King, and, with the chief King's help, drove Dermond Mac Murrough out of his dominions. Dermond came over to England for revenge; and offered to hold his realm as a vassal of King Henry, if King Henry would help him to regain it. The King consented to these terms; but only assisted him, then, with what were called Letters Patent, authorising any English subjects who were so disposed, to enter into his service, and aid his cause.

There was, at Bristol, a certain EARL RICHARD DE CLARE, called STRONGBOW; of no very good character; needy and desperate, and ready for anything that offered him a chance of improving his fortunes. There were, in South Wales, two other broken knights of the same good-for-nothing sort, called ROBERT FITZ-STEPHEN, and MAURICE FITZ-GERALD. These three, each with a small band of followers, took up Dermond's cause; and it was agreed that if it proved successful, Strongbow should marry Dermond's daughter EVA, and be declared his heir.

The trained English followers of these knights were so superior in all the discipline of battle to the Irish, that they beat them against immense superiority of numbers. In one fight, early in the war, they cut off three hundred heads, and laid them before Mac Murrough; who turned them every one up with his hands, rejoicing, and, coming to one which was the head of a man whom he had much disliked, he grasped it by the hair and ears, and tore off the nose and lips with his teeth. You may judge from this, what kind of a gentleman an Irish King in those times was. The captives, all through this war, were horribly treated; the victorious party making nothing of breaking their limbs, and casting them into the sea from the tops of high rocks. It was, in the midst of the miseries and cruelties attendant on the taking of Waterford, where the dead lay piled in the streets, and the filthy gutters ran with blood, that Strongbow married Eva. An odious marriage-company those mounds of corpses must have made, I think, and one quite worthy of the young lady's father.

He died, after Waterford and Dublin had been taken, and various successes achieved; and Strongbow became King of Leinster. Now came King Henry's opportunity. To restrain the growing power of Strongbow, he himself repaired to Dublin, as Strongbow's Royal Master, and deprived him of his kingdom, but confirmed him in the enjoyment of great possessions. The King, then, holding state in Dublin, received the homage of nearly all the Irish Kings and Chiefs, and so came home again with a great addition to his reputation as Lord of Ireland, and with a new claim on the favour of the Pope. And now, their reconciliation was completed—more easily and mildly by the Pope, than the King might have expected, I think.

At this period of his reign, when his troubles seemed so few and his prospects so bright, those domestic miseries began which gradually made

the King the most unhappy of men, reduced his great spirit, wore away his health, and broke his heart.

He had four sons. HENRY, now aged eighteen—his secret crowning of whom had given such offence to Thomas à Becket; RICHARD, aged sixteen; GEOFFREY, fifteen; and JOHN, his favourite, a young boy whom the courtiers named LACKLAND, because he had no inheritance, but to whom the King meant to give the Lordship of Ireland. All these misguided boys, in their turn, were unnatural sons to him, and unnatural brothers to each other. Prince Henry, stimulated by the French King, and by his bad mother, Queen Eleanor, began the undutiful history.

First, he demanded that his young wife, MARGARET, the French King's daughter, should be crowned as well as he. His father, the King, consented, and it was done. It was no sooner done, than he demanded to have a part of his father's dominions, during his father's life. This being refused, he made off from his father in the night, with his bad heart full of bitterness, and took refuge at the French King's Court. Within a day or two, his brothers Richard and Geoffrey followed. Their mother tried to join them—escaping in man's clothes—but she was seized by King Henry's men, and immured in prison, where she lay, deservedly, for sixteen years. Every day, however, some grasping English nobleman, to whom the King's protection of his people from their avarice and oppression had given offence, deserted him and joined the Princes. Every day he heard some fresh intelligence of the Princes levying armies against him; of Prince Henry's wearing a crown before his own ambassadors at the French Court, and being called the Junior King of England; of all the Princes swearing never to make peace with him, their father, without the consent and approval of the Barons of France. But, with his fortitude and energy unshaken, King Henry met the shock of these disasters with a resolved and cheerful face. He called upon all Royal fathers who had sons, to help him, for his cause was theirs; he hired, out of his riches, twenty thousand men to fight the false French King, who stirred his own blood against him; and he carried on the war with such vigour, that Louis soon proposed a conference to treat for peace.

The conference was held beneath an old wide-spreading green elm-tree, upon a plain in France. It led to nothing. The war recommenced. Prince Richard began his fighting career, by leading an army against his father;

but his father beat him and his army back; and thousands of his men would have rued the day in which they fought in such a wicked cause, had not the King received news of an invasion of England by the Scots, and promptly come home through a great storm to repress it. And whether he really began to fear that he suffered these troubles because à Becket had been murdered; or whether he wished to rise in the favour of the Pope, who had now declared à Becket to be a saint, or in the favour of his own people, of whom many believed that even à Becket's senseless tomb could work miracles, I don't know: but the King no sooner landed in England than he went straight to Canterbury; and when he came within sight of the distant Cathedral, he dismounted from his horse, took off his shoes, and walked with bare and bleeding feet to à Becket's grave. There, he lay down on the ground, lamenting, in the presence of many people; and by-and-by he went into the Chapter House, and, removing his clothes from his back and shoulders, submitted himself to be beaten with knotted cords (not beaten very hard, I dare say though) by eighty Priests, one after another. It chanced that on the very day when the King made this curious exhibition of himself, a complete victory was obtained over the Scots; which very much delighted the Priests, who said that it was won because of his great example of repentance. For the Priests in general had found out, since à Becket's death, that they admired him of all things—though they had hated him very cordially when he was alive.

The Earl of Flanders, who was at the head of the base conspiracy of the King's undutiful sons and their foreign friends, took the opportunity of the King being thus employed at home, to lay siege to Rouen, the capital of Normandy. But the King, who was extraordinarily quick and active in all his movements, was at Rouen, too, before it was supposed possible that he could have left England; and there he so defeated the said Earl of Flanders, that the conspirators proposed peace, and his bad sons Henry and Geoffrey submitted. Richard resisted for six weeks; but, being beaten out of castle after castle, he at last submitted too, and his father forgave him.

To forgive these unworthy princes was only to afford them breathing-time for new faithlessness. They were so false, disloyal, and dishonourable, that they were no more to be trusted than common thieves. In the very next year, Prince Henry rebelled again, and was again forgiven. In eight years more, Prince

Richard rebelled against his elder brother ; and Prince Geoffrey infamously said that the brothers could never agree well together, unless they were united against their father. In the very next year after their reconciliation by the King, Prince Henry again rebelled against his father ; and again submitted, swearing to be true ; and was again forgiven ; and again rebelled with Geoffrey.

But the end of this perfidious Prince was come. He fell sick at a French town ; and his conscience terribly reproaching him with his baseness, he sent messengers to the King his father, imploring him to come and see him, and to forgive him for the last time on his bed of death. The generous King, who had a royal and forgiving mind towards his children always, would have gone ; but this Prince had been so unnatural, that the noblemen about the King suspected treachery, and represented to him that he could not safely trust his life with such a traitor, though his own eldest son. Therefore the King sent him a ring from off his finger as a token of forgiveness ; and when the Prince had kissed it, with much grief and many tears, and had confessed to those around him how bad, and wicked, and undutiful a son he had been ; he said to the attendant Priests : " O, tie a rope about my body, and draw me out of bed, and lay me down upon a bed of ashes, that I may die with prayers to God in a repentant manner ! " And so he died, at twenty-seven years old.

Three years afterwards, Prince Geoffrey, being unhorsed at a tournament, had his brains trampled out by a crowd of horses passing over him. So, there only remained Prince Richard, and Prince John—who had grown to be a young man now, and had solemnly sworn to be faithful to his father. Richard soon rebelled again, encouraged by his friend the French King, PHILIP THE SECOND (son of Louis, who was dead) ; and soon submitted and was again forgiven, swearing on the New Testament never to rebel again ; and in another year or so, rebelled again ; and, in the presence of his father, knelt down on his knee before the King of France ; and did the French King homage ; and declared that with his aid he would possess himself, by force, of all his father's French dominions.

And yet this Richard called himself a soldier of Our Saviour ! And yet this Richard wore the Cross, which the Kings of France and England had both taken, in the previous year, at a brotherly meeting underneath the old wide-spreading elm-tree on the plain, when they had sworn (like him) to devote themselves to a

new Crusade, for the love and honour of the Truth !

Sick at heart, wearied out by the falsehood of his sons, and almost ready to lie down and die, the unhappy King who had so long stood firm, began to fail. But the Pope, to his honour, supported him ; and obliged the French King and Richard, though successful in fight, to treat for peace. Richard wanted to be crowned King of England, and pretended that he wanted to be married (which he really did not) to the French King's sister, his promised wife, whom King Henry detained in England. King Henry wanted, on the other hand, that the French King's sister should be married to his favourite son, John : the only one of his sons (he said) who had never rebelled against him. At last King Henry, deserted by his nobles one by one, distressed, exhausted, broken-hearted, consented to establish peace.

One final heavy sorrow was reserved for him, even yet. When they brought him the proposed treaty of peace, in writing, as he lay very ill in bed, they brought him also the list of the deserters from their allegiance, whom he was required to pardon. The first name upon this list was John, his favourite son, in whom he had trusted to the last.

" O John ! child of my heart ! " exclaimed the King, in a great agony of mind. " O John, whom I have loved the best ! O John, for whom I have contended through these many troubles ! Have you betrayed me too ! " And then he lay down with a heavy groan, and said, " Now let the world go as it will. I care for nothing more ! "

After a time, he told his attendants to take him to the French town of Chinon—a town he had been fond of, during many years. But he was fond of no place now ; it was too true that he could care for nothing more upon this earth. He wildly cursed the hour when he was born, and cursed the children whom he left behind him ; and expired.

As, one hundred years before, the servile followers of the Court had abandoned the Conqueror in the hour of his death, so they now abandoned his descendant. The very body was stripped, in the plunder of the Royal chamber ; and it was not easy to find the means of carrying it for burial to the abbey church of Fontevraud.

Richard was said in after years, by way of flattery, to have the heart of a Lion. It would have been far better, I think, to have had the heart of a Man. His heart, whatever it was, had cause to beat remorsefully within his breast, when he came—as he did—into the solemn

abbey, and looked on his dead father's uncovered face. His heart, whatever it was, had been a black and perjured heart, in all its dealings with the deceased King, and more deficient in a single touch of tenderness than any wild beast's in the forest.

There is a pretty story told of this Reign, called the story of FAIR ROSAMOND. It relates how the King doted on Fair Rosamond, who was the loveliest girl in all the world; and how he had a beautiful Bower built for her in a Park at Woodstock; and how it was erected in a labyrinth, and could only be found by a clue of silk. How the bad Queen Eleanor, becoming jealous of Fair Rosamond, found out the secret of the clue, and one day, appeared before her, with a dagger and a cup of poison, and left her to the choice between those deaths. How Fair Rosamond, after shedding many piteous tears and offering many useless prayers to the cruel Queen, took the poison, and fell dead in the midst of the beautiful bower, while the unconscious birds sang gaily all around her.

Now, there *was* a fair Rosamond, and she was (I dare say) the loveliest girl in all the world, and the King was certainly very fond of her, and the bad Queen Eleanor was certainly made jealous. But I am afraid—I say afraid, because I like the story so much—that there was no bower, no labyrinth, no silken clue, no dagger, no poison. I am afraid fair Rosamond retired to a nunnery near Oxford, and died there, peaceably; her sister-nuns hanging a silken drapery over her tomb, and often dressing it with flowers, in remembrance of the youth and beauty that had enchanted the King when he too was young, and when his life lay fair before him.

It was dark and ended now; faded and gone. Henry Plantagenet lay quiet in the abbey church of Fontevraud, in the fifty-seventh year of his age—never to be completed—after governing England well, for nearly thirty-five years.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENGLAND UNDER RICHARD THE FIRST, CALLED THE LION-HEART.

IN the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine, Richard of the Lion Heart succeeded to the throne of King Henry the Second, whose paternal heart he had done so much to break. He had been, as we have seen, a rebel from his boyhood; but, the moment he became a king against whom others

might rebel, he found out that rebellion was a great wickedness. In the heat of this pious discovery, he punished all the leading people who had befriended him against his father. He could scarcely have done anything that would have been a better instance of his real nature, or a better warning to fawners and parasites not to trust in lion-hearted princes.

He likewise put his late father's treasurer in chains, and locked him up in a dungeon from which he was not set free until he had relinquished, not only all the Crown treasure, but all his own money too. So, Richard certainly got the Lion's share of the wealth of this wretched treasurer, whether he had a Lion's heart or not.

He was crowned King of England, with great pomp, at Westminster; walking to the Cathedral under a silken canopy stretched on the tops of four lances, each carried by a great lord. On the day of his coronation, a dreadful murdering of the Jews took place, which seems to have given great delight to numbers of savage persons calling themselves Christians. The King had issued a proclamation forbidding the Jews (who were generally hated, though they were the most useful merchants in England) to appear at the ceremony; but as they had assembled in London from all parts, bringing presents to show their respect for the new Sovereign, some of them ventured down to Westminster Hall with their gifts; which were very readily accepted. It is supposed, now, that some noisy fellow in the crowd, pretending to be a very delicate Christian, set up a howl at this, and struck a Jew who was trying to get in at the Hall door with his present. A riot arose. The Jews who had got into the Hall, were driven forth; and some of the rabble cried out that the new King had commanded the unbelieving race to be put to death. Thereupon the crowd rushed through the narrow streets of the city, slaughtering all the Jews they met; and when they could find no more out of doors (on account of their having fled to their houses, and fastened themselves in), they ran madly about, breaking open all the houses where the Jews lived, rushing in and stabbing or spearing them, sometimes even flinging old people and children out of window into blazing fires they had lighted up below. This great cruelty lasted four-and-twenty hours, and only three men were punished for it. Even they forfeited their lives not for murdering and robbing the Jews, but for burning the houses of some Christians.

King Richard, who was a strong restless burly man, with one idea always in his head, and that the very troublesome idea of breaking the heads

of other men, was mightily impatient to go on a Crusade to the Holy Land, with a great army. As great armies could not be raised to go, even to the Holy Land, without a great deal of money, he sold the Crown domains, and even the high offices of State; recklessly appointing noblemen to rule over his English subjects, not because they were fit to govern, but because they could pay high for the privilege. In this way, and by selling pardons at a dear rate, and by varieties of avarice and oppression, he scraped together a large treasure. He then appointed two Bishops to take care of his kingdom in his absence, and gave great powers and possessions to his brother John, to secure his friendship. John would rather have been made Regent of England; but he was a sly man, and friendly to the expedition; saying to himself, no doubt, "The more fighting, the more chance of my brother being killed; and when he is killed, then I become King John!"

Before the newly levied army departed from England, the recruits and the general populace distinguished themselves by astonishing cruelties on the unfortunate Jews: whom, in many large towns, they murdered by hundreds in the most horrible manner.

At York, a large body of Jews took refuge in the Castle, in the absence of its Governor, after the wives and children of many of them had been slain before their eyes. Presently came the Governor, and demanded admission. "How can we give it thee, O Governor!" said the Jews upon the walls, "when, if we open the gate by so much as the width of a foot, the roaring crowd behind thee will press in and kill us?"

Upon this, the unjust Governor became angry, and told the people that he approved of their killing those Jews; and a mischievous maniac of a friar, dressed all in white, put himself at the head of the assault, and they assaulted the Castle for three days.

Then said JOCEM, the head-Jew (who was a Rabbi or Priest), to the rest. "Brethren, there is no hope for us with the Christians who are hammering at the gates and walls, and who must soon break in. As we and our wives and children must die, either by Christian hands, or by our own, let it be by our own. Let us destroy by fire what jewels and other treasure we have here, then fire the castle, and then perish!"

A few could not resolve to do this, but the greater part complied. They made a blazing heap of all their valuables, and, when those were consumed, set the castle in flames. While the

flames roared and crackled around them, and shooting up into the sky, turned it blood-red, JOCEM cut the throat of his beloved wife, and stabbed himself. All the others who had wives or children, did the like dreadful deed. When the populace broke in, they found (except the trembling few, cowering in corners, whom they soon killed) only heaps of greasy cinders, with here and there something like part of the blackened trunk of a burnt tree, but which had lately been a human creature, formed by the beneficent hand of the Creator as they were.

After this bad beginning, Richard and his troops went on, in no very good manner, with the Holy Crusade. It was undertaken jointly by the King of England and his old friend Philip of France. They commenced the business by reviewing their forces, to the number of one hundred thousand men. Afterwards, they severally embarked their troops for Messina, in Sicily, which was appointed as the next place of meeting.

King Richard's sister had married the King of this place, but he was dead: and his uncle TANCRED had usurped the crown, cast the Royal Widow into prison, and possessed himself of her estates. Richard fiercely demanded his sister's release, the restoration of her lands, and (according to the Royal custom of the Island) that she should have a golden chair, a golden table, four-and-twenty silver cups, and four-and-twenty silver dishes. As he was too powerful to be successfully resisted, Tancred yielded to his demands; and then the French King grew jealous, and complained that the English King wanted to be absolute in the Island of Messina and everywhere else. Richard, however, cared little or nothing for this complaint; and in consideration of a present of twenty thousand pieces of gold, promised his pretty little nephew ARTHUR, then a child of two years old, in marriage to Tancred's daughter. We shall hear again of pretty little Arthur by-and-by.

This Sicilian affair arranged without anybody's brains being knocked out (which must have rather disappointed him), King Richard took his sister away, and also a fair lady named BERENGARIA, with whom he had fallen in love in France, and whom his mother, Queen Eleanor (so long in prison, you remember, but released by Richard on his coming to the Throne), had brought out there to be his wife; and sailed with them for Cyprus.

He soon had the pleasure of fighting the King of the Island of Cyprus, for allowing his subjects to pillage some of the English troops who were shipwrecked on the shore; and easily

conquering this poor monarch, he seized his only daughter, to be a companion to the lady Berengaria, and put the King himself into silver fetters. He then sailed away again with his mother, sister, wife, and the captive princess; and soon arrived before the town of Acre, which the French King with his fleet was besieging from the sea. But the French King was in no triumphant condition, for his army had been thinned by the swords of the Saracens, and wasted by the plague; and SALADIN, the brave Sultan of the Turks, at the head of a numerous army, was at that time gallantly defending the place from the hills that rise above it.

Wherever the united army of Crusaders went, they agreed in few points except in gaming, drinking, and quarrelling, in a most unholy manner; in debauching the people among whom they tarried, whether they were friends or foes; and in carrying disturbance and ruin into quiet places. The French King was jealous of the English King, and the English King was jealous of the French King, and the disorderly and violent soldiers of the two nations were jealous of one another; consequently, the two Kings could not at first agree, even upon a joint assault on Acre; but when they did make up their quarrel for that purpose, the Saracens promised to yield the town, to give up to the Christians the wood of the Holy Cross, to set at liberty all their Christian captives, and to pay two hundred thousand pieces of gold. All this was to be done within forty days; but, not being done, King Richard ordered some three thousand Saracen prisoners to be brought out in the front of his camp, and there, in full view of their own countrymen, to be butchered.

The French King had no part in this crime; for he was by that time travelling homeward with the greater part of his men; being offended by the overbearing conduct of the English King; being anxious to look after his own dominions; and being ill, besides, from the unwholesome air of that hot and sandy country. King Richard carried on the war without him; and remained in the East, meeting with a variety of adventures, nearly a year and a half. Every night when his army was on the march, and came to a halt, the heralds cried out three times, to remind all the soldiers of the cause in which they were engaged, "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and then all the soldiers knelt and said "Amen!" Marching or encamping, the army had continually to strive with the hot air of the glaring desert, or with the Saracen soldiers animated and directed by the brave Saladin, or with both together. Sickness and

death, battle and wounds, were always among them; but through every difficulty King Richard fought like a giant, and worked like a common labourer. Long and long after he was quiet in his grave, his terrible battle-axe, with twenty English pounds of English steel in its mighty head, was a legend among the Saracens; and when all the Saracen and Christian hosts had been dust for many a year, if a Saracen horse started at any object by the wayside, his rider would exclaim, "What dost thou fear, Fool? Dost thou think King Richard is behind it?"

No one admired this King's renown for bravery more than Saladin himself, who was a generous and gallant enemy. When Richard lay ill of a fever, Saladin sent him fresh fruits from Damascus, and snow from the mountain-tops. Courty messages and compliments were frequently exchanged between them—and then King Richard would mount his horse and kill as many Saracens as he could; and Saladin would mount his, and kill as many Christians as he could. In this way King Richard fought to his heart's content at Arsof and at Jaffa; and finding himself with nothing exciting to do at Ascalon, except to rebuild, for his own defence, some fortifications there which the Saracens had destroyed, he kicked his ally the Duke of Austria, for being too proud to work at them.

The army at last came within sight of the Holy City of Jerusalem; but, being then a mere nest of jealousy, and quarrelling and fighting, soon retired, and agreed with the Saracens upon a truce for three years, three months, three days, and three hours. Then, the English Christians, protected by the noble Saladin from Saracen revenge, visited Our Saviour's tomb; and then King Richard embarked with a small force at Acre to return home.

But he was shipwrecked in the Adriatic Sea, and was fain to pass through Germany, under an assumed name. Now, there were many people in Germany who had served in the Holy Land under that proud Duke of Austria who had been kicked; and some of them, easily recognising a man so remarkable as King Richard, carried their intelligence to the kicked Duke, who straightway took him prisoner at a little inn near Vienna.

The Duke's master the Emperor of Germany, and the King of France, were equally delighted to have so troublesome a monarch in safe keeping. Friendships which are founded on a partnership in doing wrong, are never true; and the King of France was now quite as heartily King Richard's foe, as he had ever been his friend in

his unnatural conduct to his father. He monstrosly pretended that King Richard had designed to poison him in the East; he charged him with having murdered, there, a man whom he had in truth befriended; he bribed the Emperor of Germany to keep him close prisoner; and, finally, through the plotting of these two princes, Richard was brought before the German legislature, charged with the foregoing crimes, and many others. But he defended himself so well, that many of the assembly were moved to tears by his eloquence and earnestness. It was decided that he should be treated, during the rest of his captivity, in a manner more becoming his dignity than he had been, and that he should be set free on the payment of a heavy ransom. This ransom the English people willingly raised. When Queen Eleanor took it over to Germany, it was at first evaded and refused. But she appealed to the honour of all the princes of the German Empire in behalf of her son, and appealed so well that it was accepted, and the King released. Thereupon, the King of France wrote to Prince John—"Take care of thyself. The devil is unchained!"

Prince John had reason to fear his brother, for he had been a traitor to him in his captivity. He had secretly joined the French King; had vowed to the English nobles and people that his brother was dead; and had vainly tried to seize the crown. He was now in France, at a place called Evreux. Being the meanest and basest of men, he contrived a mean and base expedient for making himself acceptable to his brother. He invited the French officers of the garrison in that town to dinner, murdered them all, and then took the fortress. With this recommendation to the good will of a lion-hearted monarch, he hastened to King Richard, fell on his knees before him, and obtained the intercession of Queen Eleanor. "I forgive him," said the King, "and I hope I may forget the injury he has done me, as easily as I know he will forget my pardon."

While King Richard was in Sicily, there had been trouble in his dominions at home: one of the bishops whom he had left in charge thereof, arresting the other; and making, in his pride and ambition, as great a show as if he were King himself. But the King hearing of it at Messina, and appointing a new Regency, this LONGCHAMP (for that was his name) had fled to France in a woman's dress, and had there been encouraged and supported by the French King. With all these causes of offence against Philip in his mind, King Richard had no sooner been welcomed home by his enthusiastic subjects

with great display and splendour, and had no sooner been crowned afresh at Winchester, than he resolved to show the French King that the Devil was unchained indeed, and made war against him with great fury.

There was fresh trouble at home about this time, arising out of the discontents of the poor people, who complained that they were far more heavily taxed than the rich, and who found a spirited champion in WILLIAM FITZ-OSBERT, called LONGBEARD. He became the leader of a secret society, comprising fifty thousand men; he was seized by surprise; he stabbed the citizen who first laid hands upon him; and retreated, bravely fighting, to a church, which he maintained four days, until he was dislodged by fire, and run through the body as he came out. He was not killed, though; for he was dragged, half dead, at the tail of a horse to Smithfield, and there hanged. Death was long a favourite remedy for silencing the people's advocates; but as we go on with this history, I fancy we shall find them difficult to make an end of, for all that.

The French war, delayed occasionally by a truce, was still in progress when a certain Lord named VIDOMAR, Viscount of Limoges, chanced to find in his ground a treasure of ancient coins. As the King's vassal, he sent the King half of it; but the King claimed the whole. The lord refused to yield the whole. The King besieged the lord in his castle, swore that he would take the castle by storm, and hang every man of its defenders on the battlements.

There was a strange old song in that part of the country, to the effect that in Limoges an arrow would be made by which King Richard would die. It may be that BERTRAND DE GOURDON, a young man who was one of the defenders of the castle, had often sung it or heard it sung of a winter night, and remembered it when he saw, from his post upon the ramparts, the King attended only by his chief officer riding below the walls surveying the place. He drew an arrow to the head, took steady aim, said between his teeth, "Now I pray God speed thee well, arrow!" discharged it, and struck the King in the left shoulder.

Although the wound was not at first considered dangerous, it was severe enough to cause the King to retire to his tent, and direct the assault to be made without him. The castle was taken; and every man of its defenders was hanged, as the King had sworn all should be, except Bertrand de Gourdon, who was reserved until the royal pleasure respecting him should be known.

By that time unskilful treatment had made the wound mortal, and the King knew that he was dying. He directed Bertrand to be brought into his tent. The young man was brought there heavily chained. King Richard looked at him steadily. He looked, as steadily, at the King.

"Knave!" said King Richard. "What have I done to thee that thou shouldst take my life?"

"What hast thou done to me?" replied the young man. "With thine own hands thou hast killed my father and my two brothers. Myself thou wouldest have hanged. Let me die now, by any torture that thou wilt. My comfort is, that no torture can save Thee. Thou too must die; and, through me, the world is quit of thee!"

Again the King looked at the young man steadily. Again the young man looked steadily at him. Perhaps some remembrance of his generous enemy Saladin, who was not a Christian, came into the mind of the dying King.

"Youth!" he said, "I forgive thee. Go unhurt!"

Then, turning to the chief officer who had been riding in his company when he received the wound, King Richard said:

"Take off his chains, give him a hundred shillings, and let him depart."

He sunk down on his couch, and a dark mist seemed in his weakened eyes to fill the tent wherein he had so often rested, and he died. His age was forty-two; he had reigned ten years. His last command was not obeyed; for the chief officer flayed Bertrand de Gourdon alive, and hanged him.

There is an old tune yet known—a sorrowful air will sometimes outlive many generations of strong men, and even last longer than battle-axes, with twenty pounds of steel in the head—by which this King is said to have been discovered in his captivity. *BLONDEL*, a favourite Minstrel of King Richard, as the story relates, faithfully seeking his Royal master, went singing it outside the gloomy walls of many foreign fortresses and prisons; until at last he heard it echoed from within a dungeon, and knew the voice, and cried out in ecstasy, "O Richard, O my King!" You may believe it, if you like; it would be easy to believe worse things. Richard was himself a Minstrel and a Poet. If he had not been a Prince too, he might have been a better man perhaps, and might have gone out of the world with less bloodshed and waste of life to answer for.

CHAPTER XIV.

ENGLAND UNDER KING JOHN, CALLED LACKLAND.



AT two-and-thirty years of age, JOHN became King of England. His pretty little nephew ARTHUR had the best claim to the throne; but John seized the treasure, and made fine promises to the nobility, and got himself crowned at Westminster within a few weeks after his brother Richard's death. I doubt whether the crown could possibly have been put upon the head of a meaner coward, or a more detestable villain, if England had been searched from end to end to find him out.

The French King, Philip, refused to acknowledge the right of John to his new dignity, and declared in favour of Arthur. You must not suppose that he had any generosity of feeling for the fatherless boy; it merely suited his ambitious schemes to oppose the King of England. So John and the French King went to war about Arthur.

He was a handsome boy, at that time only twelve years old. He was not born when his father, Geoffrey, had his brains trampled out at the tournament; and, besides the misfortune of never having known a father's guidance and protection, he had the additional misfortune to have a foolish mother (*CONSTANCE* by name), lately married to her third husband. She took Arthur, upon John's accession, to the French King, who pretended to be very much his friend, and who made him a Knight, and promised him his daughter in marriage; but, who cared so little about him in reality, that finding it his interest to make peace with King John for a time, he did so without the least consideration for the poor little Prince, and heartlessly sacrificed all his interests.

Young Arthur, for two years afterwards, lived quietly; and in the course of that time his mother died. But, the French King then finding it his interest to quarrel with King John again, again made Arthur his pretence, and invited the orphan boy to court. "You know your rights, Prince," said the French King, "and you would like to be a King. Is it not so?" "Truly," said Prince Arthur, "I should greatly like to be a King!" "Then," said Philip, "you shall have two hundred gentlemen who are Knights of mine, and with them you shall go to win back the provinces belonging to you, of which your uncle, the usurping King of England, has taken possession. I myself, mean-

while, will head a force against him in Normandy." Poor Arthur was so flattered and so grateful that he signed a treaty with the crafty French King, agreeing to consider him his superior Lord, and that the French King should keep for himself whatever he could take from King John.

Now, King John was so bad in all ways, and King Philip was so perfidious, that Arthur, between the two, might as well have been a lamb between a fox and a wolf. But, being so young, he was ardent and flushed with hope; and, when the people of Brittany (which was his inheritance) sent him five hundred more knights and five thousand foot soldiers, he believed his fortune was made. The people of Brittany had been fond of him from his birth, and had requested that he might be called Arthur, in remembrance of that dimly-famous English Arthur, of whom I told you early in this book, whom they believed to have been the brave friend and companion of an old King of their own. They had tales among them about a prophet called MERLIN (of the same old time), who had foretold that their own King should be restored to them after hundreds of years; and they believed that the prophecy would be fulfilled in Arthur; that the time would come when he would rule them with a crown of Brittany upon his head; and when neither King of France nor King of England would have any power over them. When Arthur found himself riding in a glittering suit of armour on a richly caparisoned horse, at the head of his train of knights and soldiers, he began to believe this too, and to consider old Merlin a very superior prophet.

He did not know—how could he, being so innocent and inexperienced?—that his little army was a mere nothing against the power of the King of England. The French King knew it; but the poor boy's fate was little to him, so that the King of England was worried and distressed. Therefore, King Philip went his way into Normandy, and Prince Arthur went his way towards Mirebeau, a French town near Poitiers, both very well pleased.

Prince Arthur went to attack the town of Mirebeau, because his grandmother Eleanor, who has so often made her appearance in this history (and who had always been his mother's enemy), was living there, and because his Knights said, "Prince, if you can take her prisoner, you will be able to bring the King your uncle to terms!" But she was not to be easily taken. She was old enough by this time—eighty—but she was as full of stratagem as

she was full of years and wickedness. Receiving intelligence of young Arthur's approach, she shut herself up in a high tower, and encouraged her soldiers to defend it like men. Prince Arthur with his little army besieged the high tower. King John, hearing how matters stood, came up to the rescue, with *his* army. So here was a strange family-party! The boy-Prince besieging his grandmother, and his uncle besieging him!

This position of affairs did not last long. One summer night King John, by treachery, got his men into the town, surprised Prince Arthur's force, took two hundred of his knights, and seized the Prince himself in his bed. The Knights were put in heavy irons, and driven away in open carts drawn by bullocks, to various dungeons where they were most inhumanly treated, and where some of them were starved to death. Prince Arthur was sent to the castle of Falaise.

One day, while he was in prison at that castle, mournfully thinking it strange that one so young should be in so much trouble, and looking out of the small window in the deep dark wall, at the summer sky and the birds, the door was softly opened, and he saw his uncle the King standing in the shadow of the archway, looking very grim.

"Arthur," said the King, with his wicked eyes more on the stone floor than on his nephew, "will you not trust to the gentleness, the friendship, and the truthfulness of your loving uncle?"

"I will tell my loving uncle that," replied the boy, "when he does me right. Let him restore to me my kingdom of England, and then come to me and ask the question."

The King looked at him and went out. "Keep that boy close prisoner," said he to the warden of the castle.

Then, the King took secret counsel with the worst of his nobles how the Prince was to be got rid of. Some said, "Put out his eyes and keep him in prison, as Robert of Normandy was kept." Others said, "Have him stabbed." Others, "Have him hanged." Others, "Have him poisoned."

King John, feeling that in any case, whatever was done afterwards, it would be a satisfaction to his mind to have those handsome eyes burnt out that had looked at him so proudly while his own royal eyes were blinking at the stone floor, sent certain ruffians to Falaise to blind the boy with red-hot irons. But Arthur so pathetically entreated them, and shed such piteous tears, and so appealed to HUBERT DE BOURG (or BURGH), the warden of the castle, who had a love for him, and was an honourable tender man,

that Hubert could not bear it. To his eternal honour he prevented the torture from being performed, and, at his own risk, sent the savages away.

The chafed and disappointed King bethought himself of the stabbing suggestion next, and, with his shuffling manner and his cruel face, proposed it to one William de Bray. "I am a gentleman and not an executioner," said William de Bray, and left the presence with disdain.

But it was not difficult for a King to hire a murderer in those days. King John found one for his money, and sent him down to the castle of Falaise. "On what errand dost thou come?" said Hubert to this fellow. "To despatch young Arthur," he returned. "Go back to him who sent thee," answered Hubert, "and say that I will do it!"

King John very well knowing that Hubert would never do it, but that he courageously sent this reply to save the Prince or gain time, despatched messengers to convey the young prisoner to the castle of Rouen.

Arthur was soon forced from the good Hubert—of whom he had never stood in greater need than then—carried away by night, and lodged in his new prison: where, through his grated window, he could hear the deep waters of the river Seine, rippling against the stone wall below.

One dark night, as he lay sleeping, dreaming perhaps of rescue by those unfortunate gentlemen who were obscurely suffering and dying in his cause, he was roused, and bidden by his jailer to come down the staircase to the foot of the tower. He hurriedly dressed himself and obeyed. When they came to the bottom of the winding stairs, and the night air from the river blew upon their faces, the jailer trod upon his torch and put it out. Then, Arthur, in the darkness, was hurriedly drawn into a solitary boat. And in that boat, he found his uncle and one other man.

He knelt to them, and prayed them not to murder him. Deaf to his entreaties, they stabbed him and sunk his body in the river with heavy stones. When the spring-morning broke, the tower-door was closed, the boat was gone, the river sparkled on its way, and never more was any trace of the poor boy beheld by mortal eyes.

The news of this atrocious murder being spread in England, awakened a hatred of the King (already odious for his many vices, and for his having stolen away and married a noble lady while his own wife was living) that never slept again through his whole reign. In Brittany, the indignation was intense. Arthur's own sister ELEANOR was in the power of John and shut up

in a convent at Bristol, but his half-sister ALICE was in Brittany. The people chose her, and the murdered prince's father-in-law, the last husband of Constance, to represent them; and carried their fiery complaints to King Philip. King Philip summoned King John (as the holder of territory in France) to come before him and defend himself. King John refusing to appear, King Philip declared him false, perjured, and guilty; and again made war. In a little time, by conquering the greater part of his French territory, King Philip deprived him of one-third of his dominions. And, through all the fighting that took place, King John was always found, either to be eating and drinking, like a gluttonous fool, when the danger was at a distance, or to be running away, like a beaten cur, when it was near.

You might suppose that when he was losing his dominions at this rate, and when his own nobles cared so little for him or his cause that they plainly refused to follow his banner out of England, he had enemies enough. But he made another enemy of the Pope, which he did in this way.

The Archbishop of Canterbury dying, and the junior monks of that place wishing to get the start of the senior monks in the appointment of his successor, met together at midnight, secretly elected a certain REGINALD, and sent him off to Rome to get the Pope's approval. The senior monks and the King soon finding this out, and being very angry about it, the junior monks gave way, and all the monks together elected the Bishop of Norwich, who was the King's favourite. The Pope, hearing the whole story, declared that neither election would do for him, and that he elected STEPHEN LANGTON. The monks submitting to the Pope, the King turned them all out bodily, and banished them as traitors. The Pope sent three bishops to the King, to threaten him with an Interdict. The King told the bishops that if any Interdict were laid upon his kingdom, he would tear out the eyes and cut off the noses of all the monks he could lay hold of, and send them over to Rome in that undecorated state as a present for their master. The bishops, nevertheless, soon published the Interdict, and fled.

After it had lasted a year, the Pope proceeded to his next step; which was Excommunication. King John was declared excommunicated, with all the usual ceremonies. The King was so incensed at this, and was made so desperate by the disaffection of his Barons and the hatred of his people, that it is said he even privately sent ambassadors to the Turks in Spain, offering to

renounce his religion and hold his kingdom of them if they would help him. It is related that the ambassadors were admitted to the presence of the Turkish Emir through long lines of Moorish guards, and that they found the Emir with his eyes seriously fixed on the pages of a large book, from which he never once looked up. That they gave him a letter from the King containing his proposals, and were gravely dismissed. That presently the Emir sent for one of them, and conjured him, by his faith in his religion, to say what kind of man the King of England truly was? That the ambassador, thus pressed, replied that the King of England was a false tyrant, against whom his own subjects would soon rise. And that this was quite enough for the Emir.

Money being, in his position, the next best thing to men, King John spared no means of getting it. He set on foot another oppressing and torturing of the unhappy Jews (which was quite in his way), and invented a new punishment for one wealthy Jew of Bristol. Until such time as that Jew should produce a certain large sum of money, the King sentenced him to be imprisoned, and, every day, to have one tooth violently wrenched out of his head—beginning with the double teeth. For seven days, the oppressed man bore the daily pain and lost the daily tooth; but, on the eighth, he paid the money. With the treasure raised in such ways, the King made an expedition into Ireland, where some English nobles had revolted. It was one of the very few places from which he did not run away; because no resistance was shown. He made another expedition into Wales—whence he *did* run away in the end: but not before he had got from the Welsh people, as hostages, twenty-seven young men of the best families; every one of whom he caused to be slain in the following year.

To Interdict and Excommunication, the Pope now added his last sentence; Deposition. He proclaimed John no longer King, absolved all his subjects from their allegiance, and sent Stephen Langton and others to the King of France to tell him that, if he would invade England, he should be forgiven all his sins—at least, should be forgiven them by the Pope, if that would do.

As there was nothing that King Philip desired more than to invade England, he collected a great army at Rouen, and a fleet of seventeen hundred ships to bring them over. But the English people, however bitterly they hated the King, were not a people to suffer invasion quietly. They flocked to Dover, where the English standard was, in such great numbers to

enrol themselves as defenders of their native land, that there were not provisions for them, and the King could only select and retain sixty thousand. But, at this crisis, the Pope, who had his own reasons for objecting to either King John or King Philip being too powerful, interfered. He entrusted a legate, whose name was PANDOLF, with the easy task of frightening King John. He sent him to the English Camp, from France, to terrify him with exaggerations of King Philip's power, and his own weakness in the discontent of the English Barons and people. Pandolf discharged his commission so well, that King John, in a wretched panic, consented to acknowledge Stephen Langton; to resign his kingdom "to God, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul"—which meant the Pope; and to hold it, ever afterwards, by the Pope's leave, on payment of an annual sum of money. To this shameful contract he publicly bound himself in the church of the Knights Templars at Dover: where he laid at the legate's feet a part of the tribute, which the legate haughtily trampled upon. But they *do* say, that this was merely a genteel flourish, and that he was afterwards seen to pick it up and pocket it.

There was an unfortunate prophet of the name of Peter, who had greatly increased King John's terrors by predicting that he would be unknighthood (which the King supposed to signify that he would die) before the Feast of the Ascension should be past. That was the day after this humiliation. When the next morning came, and the King, who had been trembling all night, found himself alive and safe, he ordered the prophet—and his son too—to be dragged through the streets at the tails of horses, and then hanged, for having frightened him.

As King John had now submitted, the Pope, to King Philip's great astonishment, took him under his protection, and informed King Philip that he found he could not give him leave to invade England. The angry Philip resolved to do it without his leave; but he gained nothing and lost much; for, the English, commanded by the Earl of Salisbury, went over, in five hundred ships, to the French coast, before the French fleet had sailed away from it, and utterly defeated the whole.

The Pope then took off his three sentences, one after another, and empowered Stephen Langton publicly to receive King John into the favour of the Church again, and to ask him to dinner. The King, who hated Langton with all his might and main—and with reason too, for he was a great and a good man, with whom such a King could have no sympathy—pretended to cry

and to be very grateful. There was a little difficulty about settling how much the King should pay as a recompense to the clergy for the losses he had caused them; but, the end of it was, that the superior clergy got a good deal, and the inferior clergy got little or nothing—which has also happened since King John's time, I believe.

When all these matters were arranged, the King in his triumph became more fierce, and false, and insolent to all around him than he had ever been. An alliance of sovereigns against King Philip, gave him an opportunity of landing an army in France; with which he even took a town! But, on the French King's gaining a great victory, he ran away, of course, and made a truce for five years.

And now the time approached when he was to be still further humbled, and made to feel, if he could feel anything, what a wretched creature he was. Of all men in the world, Stephen Langton seemed raised up by Heaven to oppose and subdue him. When he ruthlessly burnt and destroyed the property of his own subjects, because their Lords, the Barons, would not serve him abroad, Stephen Langton fearlessly reprov'd and threatened him. When he swore to restore the laws of King Edward, or the laws of King Henry the First, Stephen Langton knew his falsehood, and pursued him through all his evasions. When the Barons met at the abbey of Saint Edmund's-Bury, to consider their wrongs and the King's oppressions, Stephen Langton roused them by his fervid words to demand a solemn charter of rights and liberties from their perjured master, and to swear, one by one, on the High Altar, that they would have it, or would wage war against him to the death. When the King hid himself in London from the Barons, and was at last obliged to receive them, they told him roundly they would not believe him unless Stephen Langton became a surety that he would keep his word. When he took the Cross to invest himself with some interest, and belong to something that was received with favour, Stephen Langton was still immovable. When he appealed to the Pope, and the Pope wrote to Stephen Langton in behalf of his new favourite, Stephen Langton was deaf, even to the Pope himself, and saw before him nothing but the welfare of England and the crimes of the English King.

At Easter-time, the Barons assembled at Stamford, in Lincolnshire, in proud array, and, marching near to Oxford where the King was, delivered into the hands of Stephen Langton and two others, a list of grievances. "And

these," they said, "he must redress, or we will do it for ourselves!" When Stephen Langton told the King as much, and read the list to him, he went half mad with rage. But that did him no more good than his afterwards trying to pacify the Barons with lies. They called themselves and their followers, "The army of God and the Holy Church." Marching through the country, with the people thronging to them everywhere (except at Northampton, where they failed in an attack upon the castle), they at last triumphantly set up their banner in London itself, whither the whole land, tired of the tyrant, seemed to flock to join them. Seven knights alone, of all the knights in England, remained with the King; who, reduced to this strait, at last sent the Earl of Pembroke to the Barons to say that he approved of everything, and would meet them to sign their charter when they would. "Then," said the Barons, "let the day be the fifteenth of June, and the place, Runny-Mead."

On Monday, the fifteenth of June, one thousand two hundred and fourteen, the King came from Windsor Castle, and the Barons came from the town of Staines, and they met on Runny-Mead, which is still a pleasant meadow by the Thames, where rushes grow in the clear water of the winding river, and its banks are green with grass and trees. On the side of the Barons, came the General of their army, ROBERT FITZ-WALTER, and a great concourse of the nobility of England. With the King, came, in all, some four-and-twenty persons of any note, most of whom despised him, and were merely his advisers in form. On that great day, and in that great company, the King signed MAGNA CHARTA—the great charter of England—by which he pledged himself to maintain the Church in its rights; to relieve the Barons of oppressive obligations as vassals of the Crown—of which the Barons, in their turn, pledged themselves to relieve *their* vassals, the people; to respect the liberties of London and all other cities and boroughs; to protect foreign merchants who came to England; to imprison no man without a fair trial; and to sell, delay, or deny justice to none. As the Barons knew his falsehood well, they further required, as their securities, that he should send out of his kingdom all his foreign troops; that for two months they should hold possession of the City of London, and Stephen Langton of the Tower; and that five-and-twenty of their body, chosen by themselves, should be a lawful committee to watch the keeping of the charter, and to make war upon him if he broke it.

All this he was obliged to yield. He signed the charter with a smile, and, if he could have looked agreeable, would have done so, as he departed from the splendid assembly. When he got home to Windsor Castle, he was quite a madman in his helpless fury. And he broke the charter immediately afterwards.

He sent abroad for foreign soldiers, and sent to the Pope for help, and plotted to take London by surprise, while the Barons should be holding a great tournament at Stamford, which they had agreed to hold there as a celebration of the charter. The Barons, however, found him out and put it off. Then, when the Barons desired to see him and tax him with his treachery, he made numbers of appointments with them, and kept none, and shifted from place to place, and was constantly sneaking and skulking about. At last he appeared at Dover, to join his foreign soldiers, of whom numbers came into his pay; and with them he besieged and took Rochester Castle, which was occupied by knights and soldiers of the Barons. He would have hanged them every one; but the leader of the foreign soldiers, fearful of what the English people might afterwards do to him, interfered to save the knights; therefore the King was fain to satisfy his vengeance with the death of all the common men. Then, he sent the Earl of Salisbury, with one portion of his army, to ravage the eastern part of his own dominions, while he carried fire and slaughter into the northern part; torturing, plundering, killing, and inflicting every possible cruelty upon the people; and, every morning, setting a worthy example to his men by setting fire, with his own monster-hands, to the house where he had slept last night. Nor was this all; for the Pope, coming to the aid of his precious friend, laid the kingdom under an Interdict again, because the people took part with the Barons. It did not much matter, for the people had grown so used to it now, that they had begun to think nothing about it. It occurred to them—perhaps to Stephen Langton too—that they could keep their churches open, and ring their bells, without the Pope's permission as well as with it. So, they tried the experiment—and found that it succeeded perfectly.

It being now impossible to bear the country, as a wilderness of cruelty, or longer to hold any terms with such a forsworn outlaw of a King, the Barons sent to LOUIS, son of the French monarch, to offer him the English crown. Caring as little for the Pope's excommunication of him if he accepted the offer, as it is possible his father may have cared for the Pope's for-

giveness of his sins, he landed at Sandwich (King John immediately running away from Dover, where he happened to be), and went on to London. The Scottish King, with whom many of the Northern English Lords had taken refuge; numbers of the foreign soldiers, numbers of the Barons, and numbers of the people went over to him every day;—King John, the while, continually running away in all directions. The career of Louis was checked, however, by the suspicions of the Barons, founded on the dying declaration of a French Lord, that when the kingdom was conquered he was sworn to banish them as traitors, and to give their estates to some of his own Nobles. Rather than suffer this, some of the Barons hesitated: others even went over to King John.

It seemed to be the turning-point of King John's fortunes, for, in his savage and murderous course, he had now taken some towns and met with some successes. But, happily for England and humanity, his death was near. Crossing a dangerous quicksand, called the Wash, not very far from Wisbeach, the tide came up and nearly drowned his army. He and his soldiers escaped; but, looking back from the shore when he was safe, he saw the roaring water sweep down in a torrent, overturn the waggons, horses, and men, that carried his treasure, and engulf them in a raging whirlpool from which nothing could be delivered.

Cursing, and swearing, and gnawing his fingers, he went on to Swinestead Abbey, where the monks set before him quantities of pears, and peaches, and new cider—some say poison too, but there is very little reason to suppose so—of which he ate and drank in an immoderate and beastly way. All night he lay ill of a burning fever, and haunted with horrible fears. Next day, they put him in a horse-litter, and carried him to Sleaford Castle, where he passed another night of pain and horror. Next day, they carried him, with greater difficulty than on the day before, to the Castle of Newark upon Trent; and there, on the 18th of October, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the seventeenth of his vile reign, was an end of this miserable brute.

CHAPTER XV.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE THIRD, CALLED,
OF WINCHESTER.

IF any of the English Barons remembered the murdered Arthur's sister, Eleanor the fair maid of Brittany, shut up in her convent at Bris-

tol, none among them spoke of her now, or maintained her right to the Crown. The dead Usurper's eldest boy, HENRY by name, was taken by the Earl of Pembroke, the Marshal of England, to the city of Gloucester, and there crowned in great haste when he was only ten years old. As the Crown itself had been lost with the King's treasure, in the raging water, and, as there was no time to make another, they put a circle of plain gold upon his head instead. "We have been the enemies of this child's father," said Lord Pembroke, a good and true gentleman, to the few Lords who were present, "and he merited our ill-will; but the child himself is innocent, and his youth demands our friendship and protection." Those Lords felt tenderly towards the little boy, remembering their own young children; and they bowed their heads, and said, "Long live King Henry the Third!"

Next, a great council met at Bristol, revised Magna Charta, and made Lord Pembroke Regent or Protector of England, as the King was too young to reign alone. The next thing to be done was to get rid of Prince Louis of France, and to win over those English Barons who were still ranged under his banner. He was strong in many parts of England, and in London itself; and he held, among other places, a certain Castle called the Castle of Mount Sorel, in Leicestershire. To this fortress, after some skirmishing and truce-making, Lord Pembroke laid siege. Louis despatched an army of six hundred knights and twenty thousand soldiers to relieve it. Lord Pembroke, who was not strong enough for such a force, retired with all his men. The army of the French Prince, which had marched there with fire and plunder, marched away with fire and plunder, and came, in a boastful swaggering manner, to Lincoln. The town submitted; but the Castle in the town, held by a brave widow lady, named NICHOLA DE CAMVILLE (whose property it was), made such a sturdy resistance, that the French Count in command of the army of the French Prince found it necessary to besiege this Castle. While he was thus engaged, word was brought to him that Lord Pembroke, with four hundred knights, two hundred and fifty men with cross-bows, and a stout force both of horse and foot, was marching towards him. "What care I?" said the French Count. "The Englishman is not so mad as to attack me and my great army in a walled town!" But the Englishman did it for all that, and did it—not so madly but so wisely, that he decoyed the great army into the narrow, ill-paved lanes and byways of Lincoln, where its horse-soldiers could not ride in any

strong body; and there he made such havoc with them, that the whole force surrendered themselves prisoners, except the Count; who said that he would never yield to any English traitor alive, and accordingly got killed. The end of this victory, which the English called, for a joke, the Fair of Lincoln, was the usual one in those times—the common men were slain without any mercy, and the knights and gentlemen paid ransom and went home.

The wife of Louis, the fair BLANCHE OF CASTILE, dutifully equipped a fleet of eighty good ships, and sent it over from France to her husband's aid. An English fleet of forty ships, some good and some bad, gallantly met them near the mouth of the Thames, and took or sunk sixty-five in one fight. This great loss put an end to the French Prince's hopes. A treaty was made at Lambeth, in virtue of which the English Barons who had remained attached to his cause returned to their allegiance, and it was engaged on both sides that the Prince and all his troops should retire peacefully to France. It was time to go; for war had made him so poor that he was obliged to borrow money from the citizens of London to pay his expenses home.

Lord Pembroke afterwards applied himself to governing the country justly, and to healing the quarrels and disturbances that had arisen among men in the days of the bad King John. He caused Magna Charta to be still more improved, and so amended the Forest Laws that a Peasant was no longer put to death for killing a stag in a Royal Forest, but was only imprisoned. It would have been well for England if it could have had so good a Protector many years longer, but that was not to be. Within three years after the young King's Coronation, Lord Pembroke died; and you may see his tomb, at this day, in the old Temple Church in London.

The Protectorship was now divided. PETER DE ROCHES, whom King John had made Bishop of Winchester, was entrusted with the care of the person of the young sovereign; and the exercise of the Royal authority was confided to EARL HUBERT DE BURGH. These two personages had from the first no liking for each other, and soon became enemies. When the young King was declared of age, Peter de Roches, finding that Hubert increased in power and favour, retired discontentedly, and went abroad. For nearly ten years afterwards Hubert had full sway alone.

But ten years is a long time to hold the favour of a King. This King, too, as he grew up, showed a strong resemblance to his father,

in feebleness, inconsistency, and irresolution. The best that can be said of him is that he was not cruel. De Roches coming home again, after ten years, and being a novelty, the King began to favour him and to look coldly on Hubert. Wanting money besides, and having made Hubert rich, he began to dislike Hubert. At last he was made to believe, or pretended to believe, that Hubert had misappropriated some of the Royal treasure; and ordered him to furnish an account of all he had done in his administration. Besides which, the foolish charge was brought against Hubert that he had made himself the King's favourite by magic. Hubert very well knowing that he could never defend himself against such nonsense, and that his old enemy must be determined on his ruin, instead of answering the charges fled to Merton Abbey. Then the King, in a violent passion, sent for the Mayor of London, and said to the Mayor, "Take twenty thousand citizens, and drag me Hubert de Burgh out of that abbey, and bring him here." The Mayor posted off to do it, but the Archbishop of Dublin (who was a friend of Hubert's) warning the King that an abbey was a sacred place, and that if he committed any violence there, he must answer for it to the Church, the King changed his mind and called the Mayor back, and declared that Hubert should have four months to prepare his defence, and should be safe and free during that time.

Hubert, who relied upon the King's word, though I think he was old enough to have known better, came out of Merton Abbey upon these conditions, and journeyed away to see his wife: a Scottish Princess who was then at St. Edmund's-Bury.

Almost as soon as he had departed from the Sanctuary, his enemies persuaded the weak King to send out one SIR GODFREY DE CRANCUMB, who commanded three hundred vagabonds called the Black Band, with orders to seize him. They came up with him at a little town in Essex, called Brentwood, when he was in bed. He leaped out of bed, got out of the house, fled to the church, ran up to the altar, and laid his hand upon the cross. Sir Godfrey and the Black Band, caring neither for church, altar, nor cross, dragged him forth to the church door, with their drawn swords flashing round his head, and sent for a Smith to rivet a set of chains upon him. When the Smith (I wish I knew his name!) was brought, all dark and swarthy with the smoke of his forge, and panting with the speed he had made; and the Black Band, falling aside to show him the Pri-

soner, cried with a loud uproar, "Make the fetters heavy! make them strong!" the Smith dropped upon his knee—but not to the Black Band—and said, "This is the brave Earl Hubert de Burgh, who fought at Dover Castle, and destroyed the French fleet, and has done his country much good service. You may kill me, if you like, but I will never make a chain for Earl Hubert de Burgh!"

The Black Band never blushed, or they might have blushed at this. They knocked the Smith about from one to another, and swore at him, and tied the Earl on horseback, undressed as he was, and carried him off to the Tower of London. The Bishops, however, were so indignant at the violation of the Sanctuary of the Church, that the frightened King soon ordered the Black Band to take him back again; at the same time commanding the Sheriff of Essex to prevent his escaping out of Brentwood Church. Well! the Sheriff dug a deep trench all round the church, and erected a high fence, and watched the church night and day; the Black Band and their Captain watched it too, like three hundred and one black wolves. For thirty-nine days, Hubert de Burgh remained within. At length, upon the fortieth day, cold and hunger were too much for him, and he gave himself up to the Black Band, who carried him off, for the second time, to the Tower. When his trial came on, he refused to plead; but at last it was arranged that he should give up all the royal lands which had been bestowed upon him, and should be kept at the Castle of Devizes, in what was called "free prison," in charge of four knights appointed by four lords. There, he remained almost a year, until, learning that a follower of his old enemy the Bishop was made Keeper of the Castle, and fearing that he might be killed by treachery, he climbed the ramparts one dark night, dropped from the top of the high Castle wall into the moat, and coming safely to the ground, took refuge in another church. From this place he was delivered by a party of horse despatched to his help by some nobles, who were by this time in revolt against the King, and assembled in Wales. He was finally pardoned and restored to his estates, but he lived privately, and never more aspired to a high post in the realm, or to a high place in the King's favour. And thus end—more happily than the stories of many favourites of Kings—the adventures of Earl Hubert de Burgh.

The nobles, who had risen in revolt, were stirred up to rebellion by the overbearing conduct of the Bishop of Winchester, who, finding

that the King secretly hated the Great Charter which had been forced from his father, did his utmost to confirm him in that dislike, and in the preference he showed to foreigners over the English. Of this, and of his even publicly declaring that the Barons of England were inferior to those of France, the English Lords complained with such bitterness, that the King, finding them well supported by the clergy, became frightened for his throne, and sent away the Bishop and all his foreign associates. On his marriage, however, with ELEANOR, a French lady, the daughter of the Count of Provence, he openly favoured the foreigners again; and so many of his wife's relations came over, and made such an immense family-party at court, and got so many good things, and pocketed so much money, and were so high with the English whose money they pocketed, that the bolder English Barons murmured openly about a clause there was in the Great Charter, which provided for the banishment of unreasonable favourites. But, the foreigners only laughed disdainfully, and said, "What are your English laws to us?"

King Philip of France had died, and had been succeeded by Prince Louis, who had also died after a short reign of three years, and had been succeeded by his son of the same name—so moderate and just a man that he was not the least in the world like a King, as Kings went. ISABELLA, King Henry's mother, wished very much (for a certain spite she had) that England should make war against this King; and, as King Henry was a mere puppet in anybody's hands who knew how to manage his feebleness, she easily carried her point with him. But, the Parliament were determined to give him no money for such a war. So, to defy the Parliament, he packed up thirty large casks of silver—I don't know how he got so much; I dare say he screwed it out of the miserable Jews—and put them aboard ship, and went away himself to carry war into France: accompanied by his mother and his brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who was rich and clever. But he only got well beaten, and came home.

The good-humour of the Parliament was not restored by this. They reproached the King with wasting the public money to make greedy foreigners rich, and were so stern with him, and so determined not to let him have more of it to waste if they could help it, that he was at his wit's end for some, and tried so shamelessly to get all he could from his subjects by excuses or by force, that the people used to say the King was the sturdiest beggar in England. He took the Cross, thinking to get some money by that

means; but, as it was very well known that he never meant to go on a crusade, he got none. In all this contention, the Londoners were particularly keen against the King, and the King hated them warmly in return. Hating or loving, however, made no difference; he continued in the same condition for nine or ten years, when at last the Barons said that if he would solemnly confirm their liberties afresh, the Parliament would vote him a large sum.

As he readily consented, there was a great meeting held in Westminster Hall, one pleasant day in May, when all the clergy, dressed in their robes and holding every one of them a burning candle in his hand, stood up (the Barons being also there) while the Archbishop of Canterbury read the sentence of excommunication against any man, and all men, who should henceforth, in any way, infringe the Great Charter of the Kingdom. When he had done, they all put out their burning candles with a curse upon the soul of any one, and every one, who should merit that sentence. The King concluded with an oath to keep the Charter, "As I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a Knight, as I am a King!"

It was easy to make oaths, and easy to break them; and the King did both, as his father had done before him. He took to his old courses again when he was supplied with money, and soon cured of their weakness the few who had ever really trusted him. When his money was gone, and he was once more borrowing and begging everywhere with a meanness worthy of his nature, he got into a difficulty with the Pope respecting the Crown of Sicily, which the Pope said he had a right to give away, and which he offered to King Henry for his second son, PRINCE EDMUND. But, if you or I give away what we have not got, and what belongs to somebody else, it is likely that the person to whom we give it, will have some trouble in taking it. It was exactly so in this case. It was necessary to conquer the Sicilian Crown before it could be put upon young Edmund's head. It could not be conquered without money. The Pope ordered the clergy to raise money. The clergy, however, were not so obedient to him as usual; they had been disputing with him for some time about his unjust preference of Italian Priests in England; and they had begun to doubt whether the King's chaplain, whom he allowed to be paid for preaching in seven hundred churches, could possibly be, even by the Pope's favour, in seven hundred places at once. "The Pope and the King together," said the Bishop of London, "may take the mitre off my head;

but, if they do, they will find that I shall put on a soldier's helmet. I pay nothing." The Bishop of Worcester was as bold as the Bishop of London, and would pay nothing either. Such sums as the more timid or more helpless of the clergy did raise were squandered away, without doing any good to the King, or bringing the Sicilian Crown an inch nearer to Prince Edmund's head. The end of the business was, that the Pope gave the Crown to the brother of the King of France (who conquered it for himself), and sent the

King of England in a bill of one hundred thousand pounds for the expenses of not having won it.

The King was now so much distressed that we might almost pity him, if it were possible to pity a King so shabby and ridiculous. His clever brother, Richard, had bought the title of King of the Romans from the German people, and was no longer near him, to help him with advice. The clergy, resisting the very Pope, were in alliance with the Barons. The Barons



HUBERT DE BURGH AND THE BLACK BAND.

were headed by SIMON DE MONTFORT, Earl of Leicester, married to King Henry's sister, and, though a foreigner himself, the most popular man in England against the foreign favourites. When the King next met his Parliament, the Barons, led by this Earl, came before him, armed from head to foot, and cased in armour. When the Parliament again assembled, in a month's time, at Oxford, this Earl was at their head, and the King was obliged to consent, on oath, to what was called a Committee of Govern-

ment: consisting of twenty-four members: twelve chosen by the Barons, and twelve chosen by himself.

But, at a good time for him, his brother Richard came back. Richard's first act (the Barons would not admit him into England on other terms) was to swear to be faithful to the Committee of Government—which he immediately began to oppose with all his might. Then, the Barons began to quarrel among themselves; especially the proud Earl of Gloucester

with the Earl of Leicester, who went abroad in disgust. Then, the people began to be dissatisfied with the Barons, because they did not do enough for them. The King's chances seemed so good again at length, that he took heart enough—or caught it from his brother—to tell the Committee of Government that he abolished them—as to his oath, never mind that, the Pope said!—and to seize all the money in the Mint, and to shut himself up in the Tower of London. Here he was joined by his only son, Prince Edward; and, from the Tower, he made public a letter of the Pope's to the world in general, informing all men that he had been an excellent and just King for five-and-forty years.

As everybody knew he had been nothing of the sort, nobody cared much for this document. It so chanced that the proud Earl of Gloucester dying, was succeeded by his son; and that his son, instead of being the enemy of the Earl of Leicester, was (for the time) his friend. It fell out, therefore, that these two Earls joined their forces, took several of the Royal Castles in the country, and advanced as hard as they could on London. The London people, always opposed to the King, declared for them with great joy. The King himself remained shut up, not at all gloriously, in the Tower. Prince Edward made the best of his way to Windsor Castle. His mother, the Queen, attempted to follow him by water; but, the people seeing her barge rowing up the river, and hating her with all their hearts, ran to London Bridge, got together a quantity of stones and mud, and pelted the barge as it came through, crying furiously, "Drown the witch! Drown her!" They were so near doing it, that the Mayor took the old lady under his protection, and shut her up in St. Paul's until the danger was past.

It would require a great deal of writing on my part, and a great deal of reading on yours, to follow the King through his disputes with the Barons, and to follow the Barons through their disputes with one another—so I will make short work of it for both of us, and only relate the chief events that arose out of these quarrels. The good King of France was asked to decide between them. He gave it as his opinion that the King must maintain the Great Charter, and that the Barons must give up the Committee of Government, and all the rest that had been done by the Parliament at Oxford: which the Royalists, or King's party, scornfully called the Mad Parliament. The Barons declared that these were not fair terms, and they would not accept them. Then they caused the great bell of St.

Paul's to be tolled, for the purpose of rousing up the London people, who armed themselves at the dismal sound and formed quite an army in the streets. I am sorry to say, however, that instead of falling upon the King's party with whom their quarrel was, they fell upon the miserable Jews, and killed at least five hundred of them. They pretended that some of these Jews were on the King's side, and that they kept hidden in their houses, for the destruction of the people, a certain terrible composition called Greek Fire, which could not be put out with water, but only burnt the fiercer for it. What they really did keep in their houses was money; and this their cruel enemies wanted, and this their cruel enemies took, like robbers and murderers.

The Earl of Leicester put himself at the head of these Londoners and other forces, and followed the King to Lewes in Sussex, where he lay encamped with his army. Before giving the King's forces battle here, the Earl addressed his soldiers, and said that King Henry the Third had broken so many oaths, that he had become the enemy of God, and therefore they would wear white crosses on their breasts, as if they were arrayed, not against a fellow-Christian, but against a Turk. White-crossed accordingly, they rushed into the fight. They would have lost the day—the King having on his side all the foreigners in England: and, from Scotland, JOHN COMYN, JOHN BALIOL, and ROBERT BRUCE, with all their men—but for the impatience of PRINCE EDWARD, who, in his hot desire to have vengeance on the people of London, threw the whole of his father's army into confusion. He was taken Prisoner; so was the King; so was the King's brother the King of the Romans; and five thousand Englishmen were left dead upon the bloody grass.

For this success, the Pope excommunicated the Earl of Leicester: which neither the Earl nor the people cared at all about. The people loved him and supported him, and he became the real King; having all the power of the government in his own hands, though he was outwardly respectful to King Henry the Third, whom he took with him wherever he went, like a poor old limp court-card. He summoned a Parliament (in the year one thousand two hundred and sixty-five) which was the first Parliament in England that the people had any real share in electing; and he grew more and more in favour with the people every day, and they stood by him in whatever he did.

Many of the other Barons, and particularly the Earl of Gloucester, who had become by this time as proud as his father, grew jealous of this

powerful and popular Earl, who was proud too, and began to conspire against him. Since the battle of Lewes, Prince Edward had been kept as a hostage, and, though he was otherwise treated like a Prince, had never been allowed to go out without attendants appointed by the Earl of Leicester, who watched him. The conspiring Lords found means to propose to him, in secret, that they should assist him to escape, and should make him their leader : to which he very heartily assented.

So, on a day that was agreed upon, he said to his attendants after dinner (being then at Hereford), "I should like to ride on horseback, this fine afternoon, a little way into the country." As they, too, thought it would be very pleasant to have a canter in the sunshine, they all rode out of the town together in a gay little troop. When they came to a fine level piece of turf, the Prince fell to comparing their horses one with another, and offering bets that one was faster than another ; and the attendants, suspecting no harm, rode galloping matches until their horses were quite tired. The Prince rode no matches himself, but looked on from his saddle, and staked his money. Thus they passed the whole merry afternoon. Now, the sun was setting, and they were all going slowly up a hill, the Prince's horse very fresh and all the other horses very weary, when a strange rider mounted on a grey steed appeared at the top of the hill, and waved his hat. "What does the fellow mean?" said the attendants one to another. The Prince answered on the instant by setting spurs to his horse, dashing away at his utmost speed, joining the man, riding into the midst of a little crowd of horsemen who were then seen waiting under some trees, and who closed around him ; and so he departed in a cloud of dust, leaving the road empty of all but the baffled attendants, who sat looking at one another, while their horses drooped their ears and panted.

The Prince joined the Earl of Gloucester at Ludlow. The Earl of Leicester, with a part of the army and the stupid old King, was at Hereford. One of the Earl of Leicester's sons, Simon de Montfort, with another part of the army, was in Sussex. To prevent these two parts from uniting was the Prince's first object. He attacked Simon de Montfort by night, defeated him, seized his banners and treasure, and forced him into Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, which belonged to his family.

His father, the Earl of Leicester, in the meanwhile, not knowing what had happened, marched out of Hereford, with his part of the army and the King, to meet him. He came, on a bright

morning in August, to Evesham, which is watered by the pleasant river Avon. Looking rather anxiously across the prospect towards Kenilworth, he saw his own banners advancing ; and his face brightened with joy. But, it clouded darkly when he presently perceived that the banners were captured, and in the enemy's hands ; and he said, "It is over. The Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are Prince Edward's!"

He fought like a true Knight, nevertheless. When his horse was killed under him, he fought on foot. It was a fierce battle, and the dead lay in heaps everywhere. The old King, stuck up in a suit of armour on a big war-horse, which didn't mind him at all, and which carried him into all sorts of places where he didn't want to go, got into everybody's way, and very nearly got knocked on the head by one of his son's men. But he managed to pipe out, "I am Harry of Winchester!" and the Prince, who heard him, seized his bridle, and took him out of peril. The Earl of Leicester still fought bravely, until his best son Henry was killed, and the bodies of his best friends choked his path ; and then he fell, still fighting, sword in hand. They mangled his body, and sent it as a present to a noble lady—but a very unpleasant lady, I should think—who was the wife of his worst enemy. They could not mangle his memory in the minds of the faithful people, though. Many years afterwards, they loved him more than ever, and regarded him as a Saint, and always spoke of him as "Sir Simon the Righteous."

And even though he was dead, the cause for which he had fought still lived, and was strong, and forced itself upon the King in the very hour of victory. Henry found himself obliged to respect the Great Charter, however much he hated it, and to make laws similar to the laws of the Great Earl of Leicester, and to be moderate and forgiving towards the people at last—even towards the people of London, who had so long opposed him. There were more risings before all this was done, but they were set at rest by these means, and Prince Edward did his best in all things to restore peace. One Sir Adam de Gourdon was the last dissatisfied knight in arms ; but the Prince vanquished him in single combat, in a wood, and nobly gave him his life, and became his friend, instead of slaying him. Sir Adam was not ungrateful. He ever afterwards remained devoted to his generous conqueror.

When the troubles of the Kingdom were thus calmed, Prince Edward and his cousin Henry took the Cross, and went away to the Holy Land, with many English Lords and Knights.

Four years afterwards the King of the Romans died, and, next year (one thousand two hundred and seventy-two), his brother the weak King of England died. He was sixty-eight years old then, and had reigned fifty-six years. He was as much of a King in death, as he had ever been in life. He was the mere pale shadow of a King at all times.

CHAPTER XVI.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE FIRST, CALLED LONGSHANKS.

IT was now the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy-two; and Prince Edward, the heir to the throne, being away in the Holy Land, knew nothing of his father's death. The Barons, however, proclaimed him King, immediately after the Royal funeral; and the people very willingly consented, since most men knew too well by this time what the horrors of a contest for the crown were. So King Edward the First, called, in a not very complimentary manner, LONGSHANKS, because of the slenderness of his legs, was peacefully accepted by the English Nation.

His legs had need to be strong, however long and thin they were; for they had to support him through many difficulties on the fiery sands of Asia, where his small force of soldiers fainted, died, deserted, and seemed to melt away. But his prowess made light of it, and he said, "I will go on, if I go on with no other follower than my groom!"

A Prince of this spirit gave the Turks a deal of trouble. He stormed Nazareth, at which place, of all places on earth, I am sorry to relate, he made a frightful slaughter of innocent people; and then he went to Acre, where he got a truce of ten years from the Sultan. He had very nearly lost his life in Acre, through the treachery of a Saracen Noble, called the Emir of Jaffa, who, making the pretence that he had some idea of turning Christian and wanted to know all about that religion, sent a trusty messenger to Edward very often—with a dagger in his sleeve. At last, one Friday in Whitsun week, when it was very hot, and all the sandy prospect lay beneath the blazing sun, burnt up like a great overdone biscuit, and Edward was lying on a couch, dressed for coolness in only a loose robe, the messenger, with his chocolate-coloured face and his bright dark eyes and

white teeth, came creeping in with a letter, and kneeled down like a tame tiger. But, the moment Edward stretched out his hand to take the letter, the tiger made a spring at his heart. He was quick, but Edward was quick too. He seized the traitor by his chocolate throat, threw him to the ground, and slew him with the very dagger he had drawn. The weapon had struck Edward in the arm, and although the wound itself was slight, it threatened to be mortal, for the blade of the dagger had been smeared with poison. Thanks, however, to a better surgeon than was often to be found in those times, and to some wholesome herbs, and above all, to his faithful wife, ELEANOR, who devotedly nursed him, and is said by some to have sucked the poison from the wound with her own red lips (which I am very willing to believe), Edward soon recovered and was sound again.

As the King his father had sent entreaties to him to return home, he now began the journey. He had got as far as Italy, when he met messengers who brought him intelligence of the King's death. Hearing that all was quiet at home, he made no haste to return to his own dominions, but paid a visit to the Pope, and went in state through various Italian Towns, where he was welcomed with acclamations as a mighty champion of the Cross from the Holy Land, and where he received presents of purple mantles and prancing horses, and went along in great triumph. The shouting people little knew that he was the last English monarch who would ever embark in a crusade, or that within twenty years every conquest which the Christians had made in the Holy Land at the cost of so much blood, would be won back by the Turks. But all this came to pass.

There was, and there is, an old town standing in a plain in France, called Châlons. When the King was coming towards this place on his way to England, a wily French Lord, called the Count of Châlons, sent him a polite challenge to come with his knights and hold a fair tournament with the Count and *his* knights, and make a day of it with sword and lance. It was represented to the King that the Count of Châlons was not to be trusted, and that, instead of a holiday fight for mere show and in good humour, he secretly meant a real battle, in which the English should be defeated by superior force.

The King, however, nothing afraid, went to the appointed place on the appointed day with a thousand followers. When the Count came with two thousand and attacked the English in earnest, the English rushed at them with such

valour that the Count's men and the Count's horses soon began to be tumbled down all over the field. The Count himself seized the King round the neck, but the King tumbled *him* out of his saddle in return for the compliment, and, jumping from his own horse, and standing over him, beat away at his iron armour like a blacksmith hammering on his anvil. Even when the Count owned himself defeated and offered his sword, the King would not do him the honour to take it, but made him yield it up to a common soldier. There had been such fury shown in this fight, that it was afterwards called the little Battle of Châlons.

The English were very well disposed to be proud of their King after these adventures; so, when he landed at Dover in the year one thousand two hundred and seventy-four (being then thirty-six years old), and went on to Westminster where he and his good Queen were crowned with great magnificence, splendid rejoicings took place. For the coronation-feast there were provided, among other eatables, four hundred oxen, four hundred sheep, four hundred and fifty pigs, eighteen wild boars, three hundred fitches of bacon, and twenty thousand fowls. The fountains and conduits in the street flowed with red and white wine instead of water; the rich citizens hung silks and cloths of the brightest colours out of their windows to increase the beauty of the show, and threw out gold and silver by whole handfuls to make scrambles for the crowd. In short, there was such eating and drinking, such music and capering, such a ringing of bells and tossing of caps, such a shouting, and singing, and revelling, as the narrow overhanging streets of old London City had not witnessed for many a long day. All the people were merry—except the poor Jews—who, trembling within their houses, and scarcely daring to peep out, began to foresee that they would have to find the money for this joviality sooner or later.

To dismiss this sad subject of the Jews for the present, I am sorry to add that in this reign they were most unmercifully pillaged. They were hanged in great numbers, on accusations of having clipped the King's coin—which all kinds of people had done. They were heavily taxed; they were disgracefully badged; they were, on one day, thirteen years after the coronation, taken up with their wives and children and thrown into beastly prisons, until they purchased their release by paying to the King twelve thousand pounds. Finally, every kind of property belonging to them was seized by the King, except so little as would defray the charge of their taking themselves away into foreign coun-

tries. Many years elapsed before the hope of gain induced any of their race to return to England, where they had been treated so heartlessly and had suffered so much.

If King Edward the First had been as bad a king to Christians as he was to Jews, he would have been bad indeed. But he was, in general, a wise and great monarch, under whom the country much improved. He had no love for the Great Charter—few Kings had, through many many years—but he had high qualities. The first bold object which he conceived when he came home, was, to unite under one Sovereign England, Scotland, and Wales; the two last of which countries had each a little king of its own, about whom the people were always quarrelling and fighting, and making a prodigious disturbance—a great deal more than he was worth. In the course of King Edward's reign he was engaged, besides, in a war with France. To make these quarrels clearer, we will separate their histories and take them thus. Wales, first. France, second. Scotland, third.

LLEWELLYN was the Prince of Wales. He had been on the side of the Barons in the reign of the stupid old King, but had afterwards sworn allegiance to him. When King Edward came to the throne, Llewellyn was required to swear allegiance to him also; which he refused to do. The King, being crowned and in his own dominions, three times more required Llewellyn to come and do homage; and three times more Llewellyn said he would rather not. He was going to be married to ELEANOR DE MONTFORT, a young lady of the family mentioned in the last reign; and it chanced that this young lady, coming from France with her youngest brother, EMERIC, was taken by an English ship, and was ordered by the English King to be detained. Upon this, the quarrel came to a head. The King went, with his fleet, to the coast of Wales, where, so encompassing Llewellyn, that he could only take refuge in the bleak mountain region of Snowdon in which no provisions could reach him, he was soon starved into an apology, and into a treaty of peace, and into paying the expenses of the war. The King, however, forgave him some of the hardest conditions of the treaty, and consented to his marriage. And he now thought he had reduced Wales to obedience.

But, the Welsh, although they were naturally a gentle, quiet, pleasant people, who liked to receive strangers in their cottages among the mountains, and to set before them with free hospitality whatever they had to eat and drink, and to play to them on their harps, and sing

their native ballads to them, were a people of great spirit when their blood was up. Englishmen, after this affair, began to be insolent in Wales, and to assume the air of masters; and the Welsh pride could not bear it. Moreover, they believed in that unlucky old Merlin, some of whose unlucky old prophecies somebody always seemed doomed to remember when there was a chance of its doing harm; and just at this time some blind old gentleman with a harp and a long white beard, who was an excellent person, but had become of an unknown age and tedious, burst out with a declaration that Merlin had predicted that when English money had become round, a Prince of Wales would be crowned in London. Now, King Edward had recently forbidden the English penny to be cut into halves and quarters for halfpence and farthings, and had actually introduced a round coin; therefore, the Welsh people said this was the time Merlin meant, and rose accordingly.

King Edward had bought over PRINCE DAVID, Llewellyn's brother, by heaping favours upon him; but he was the first to revolt, being perhaps troubled in his conscience. One stormy night, he surprised the Castle of Hawarden, in possession of which an English nobleman had been left; killed the whole garrison, and carried off the nobleman a prisoner to Snowdon. Upon this, the Welsh people rose like one man. King Edward, with his army, marching from Worcester to the Menai Strait, crossed it—near to where the wonderful tubular iron bridge now, in days so different, makes a passage for railway trains—by a bridge of boats that enabled forty men to march abreast. He subdued the Island of Anglesea, and sent his men forward to observe the enemy. The sudden appearance of the Welsh created a panic among them, and they fell back to the bridge. The tide had in the meantime risen and separated the boats; the Welsh pursuing them, they were driven into the sea, and there they sank, in their heavy iron armour, by thousands. After this victory Llewellyn, helped by the severe winter-weather of Wales, gained another battle; but the King ordering a portion of his English army to advance through South Wales, and catch him between two foes, and Llewellyn bravely turning to meet this new enemy, he was surprised and killed—very meanly, for he was unarmed and defenceless. His head was struck off and sent to London, where it was fixed upon the Tower, encircled with a wreath, some say of ivy, some say of willow, some say of silver, to make it look like a ghastly coin in ridicule of the prediction.

David, however, still held out for six months,

though eagerly sought after by the King, and hunted by his own countrymen. One of them finally betrayed him with his wife and children. He was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; and from that time this became the established punishment of Traitors in England—a punishment wholly without excuse, as being revolting, vile, and cruel, after its object is dead; and which has no sense in it, as its only real degradation (and that nothing can blot out) is to the country that permits on any consideration such abominable barbarity.

Wales was now subdued. The Queen giving birth to a young prince in the Castle of Carnarvon, the King showed him to the Welsh people as their countryman, and called him Prince of Wales; a title that has ever since been borne by the heir-apparent to the English Throne—which that little Prince soon became, by the death of his elder brother. The King did better things for the Welsh than that, by improving their laws and encouraging their trade. Disturbances still took place, chiefly occasioned by the avarice and pride of the English Lords, on whom Welsh lands and castles had been bestowed; but they were subdued, and the country never rose again. There is a legend that to prevent the people from being incited to rebellion by the songs of their bards and harpers, Edward had them all put to death. Some of them may have fallen among other men who held out against the King; but this general slaughter is, I think, a fancy of the harpers themselves, who, I dare say, made a song about it many years afterwards, and sang it by the Welsh firesides until it came to be believed.

The foreign war of the reign of Edward the First arose in this way. The crews of two vessels, one a Norman ship, and the other an English ship, happened to go to the same place in their boats to fill their casks with fresh water. Being rough angry fellows, they began to quarrel, and then to fight—the English with their fists; the Normans with their knives—and, in the fight, a Norman was killed. The Norman crew, instead of revenging themselves upon those English sailors with whom they had quarrelled (who were too strong for them, I suspect), took to their ship again in a great rage, attacked the first English ship they met, laid hold of an unoffending merchant who happened to be on board, and brutally hanged him in the rigging of their own vessel with a dog at his feet. This so enraged the English sailors that there was no restraining them; and whenever, and wherever, English sailors met Norman sailors, they fell

upon each other tooth and nail. The Irish and Dutch sailors took part with the English; the French and Genoese sailors helped the Normans; and thus the greater part of the mariners sailing over the sea became, in their way, as violent and raging as the sea itself when it is disturbed.

King Edward's fame had been so high abroad that he had been chosen to decide a difference between France and another foreign power, and had lived upon the Continent three years. At first, neither he nor the French King PHILIP (the good Louis had been dead some time) interfered in these quarrels; but when a fleet of eighty English ships engaged and utterly defeated a Norman fleet of two hundred, in a pitched battle fought round a ship at anchor, in which no quarter was given, the matter became too serious to be passed over. King Edward, as Duke of Guienne, was summoned to present himself before the King of France, at Paris, and answer for the damage done by his sailor subjects. At first, he sent the Bishop of London as his representative, and then his brother EDMUND, who was married to the French Queen's mother. I am afraid Edmund was an easy man, and allowed himself to be talked over by his charming relations, the French court ladies; at all events, he was induced to give up his brother's dukedom for forty days—as a mere form, the French King said, to satisfy his honour—and he was so very much astonished, when the time was out, to find that the French King had no idea of giving it up again, that I should not wonder if it hastened his death; which soon took place.

King Edward was a King to win his foreign dukedom back again, if it could be won by energy and valour. He raised a large army, renounced his allegiance as Duke of Guienne, and crossed the sea to carry war into France. Before any important battle was fought, however, a truce was agreed upon for two years; and in the course of that time, the Pope effected a reconciliation. King Edward, who was now a widower, having lost his affectionate and good wife, Eleanor, married the French King's sister, MARGARET; and the Prince of Wales was contracted to the French King's daughter, ISABELLA.

Out of bad things, good things sometimes arise. Out of this hanging of the innocent merchant, and the bloodshed and strife it caused, there came to be established one of the greatest powers that the English people now possess. The preparations for the war being very expensive, and King Edward greatly wanting money, and being very arbitrary in his ways of raising it, some of the Barons began firmly to oppose him.

Two of them, in particular, HUMPHREY BOHUN, Earl of Hereford, and ROGER BIGOD, Earl of Norfolk, were so stout against him, that they maintained he had no right to command them to head his forces in Guienne, and flatly refused to go there. "By Heaven, Sir Earl," said the King to the Earl of Hereford, in a great passion, "you shall either go or be hanged!" "By Heaven, Sir King," replied the Earl, "I will neither go nor yet will I be hanged!" and both he and the other Earl sturdily left the court, attended by many Lords. The King tried every means of raising money. He taxed the clergy, in spite of all the Pope said to the contrary; and when they refused to pay, reduced them to submission, by saying Very well, then they had no claim upon the government for protection, and any man might plunder them who would—which a good many men were very ready to do, and very readily did, and which the clergy found too losing a game to be played at long. He seized all the wool and leather in the hands of the merchants, promising to pay for it some fine day; and he set a tax upon the exportation of wool, which was so unpopular among the traders that it was called "The evil toll." But all would not do. The Barons, led by those two great Earls, declared any taxes imposed without the consent of Parliament, unlawful; and the Parliament refused to impose taxes, until the King should confirm afresh the two Great Charters, and should solemnly declare in writing, that there was no power in the country to raise money from the people, evermore, but the power of Parliament representing all ranks of the people. The King was very unwilling to diminish his own power by allowing this great privilege in the Parliament; but there was no help for it, and he at last complied. We shall come to another King by-and-by, who might have saved his head from rolling off, if he had profited by this example.

The people gained other benefits in Parliament from the good sense and wisdom of this King. Many of the laws were much improved; provision was made for the greater safety of travellers, and the apprehension of thieves and murderers; the priests were prevented from holding too much land, and so becoming too powerful; and Justices of the Peace were first appointed (though not at first under that name) in various parts of the country.

And now we come to Scotland, which was the great and lasting trouble of the reign of King Edward the First.

About thirteen years after King Edward's

coronation, Alexander the Third, the King of Scotland, died of a fall from his horse. He had been married to Margaret, King Edward's sister. All their children being dead, the Scottish crown became the right of a young Princess only eight years old, the daughter of ERIC, King of Norway, who had married a daughter of the deceased sovereign. King Edward proposed, that the Maiden of Norway, as this Princess was called, should be engaged to be married to his eldest son; but, unfortunately, as she was coming over to England she fell sick, and landing on one of the Orkney Islands, died there. A great commotion immediately began in Scotland, where as many as thirteen noisy claimants to the vacant throne started up and made a general confusion.

King Edward being much renowned for his sagacity and justice, it seems to have been agreed to refer the dispute to him. He accepted the trust, and went with an army to the Borderland where England and Scotland joined. There, he called upon the Scottish gentlemen to meet him at the Castle of Norham, on the English side of the river Tweed; and to that Castle they came. But, before he would take any step in the business, he required those Scottish gentlemen, one and all, to do homage to him as their superior Lord; and when they hesitated, he said, "By holy Edward, whose crown I wear, I will have my rights, or I will die in maintaining them!" The Scottish gentlemen, who had not expected this, were disconcerted, and asked for three weeks to think about it.

At the end of the three weeks, another meeting took place, on a green plain on the Scottish side of the river. Of all the competitors for the Scottish throne, there were only two who had any real claim, in right of their near kindred to the Royal family. These were JOHN BALIOL and ROBERT BRUCE: and the right was, I have no doubt, on the side of John Baliol. At this particular meeting John Baliol was not present, but Robert Bruce was; and on Robert Bruce being formally asked whether he acknowledged the King of England for his superior lord, he answered, plainly and distinctly, Yes, he did. Next day, John Baliol appeared, and said the same. This point settled, some arrangements were made for inquiring into their titles.

The inquiry occupied a pretty long time—more than a year. While it was going on, King Edward took the opportunity of making a journey through Scotland, and calling upon the Scottish people of all degrees to acknowledge themselves his vassals, or be imprisoned until they did. In the meanwhile, Commissioners were appointed to conduct the inquiry, a Parli-

ment was held at Berwick about it, the two claimants were heard at full length, and there was a vast amount of talking. At last, in the great hall of the Castle of Berwick, the King gave judgment in favour of John Baliol: who, consenting to receive his crown by the King of England's favour and permission, was crowned at Scone, in an old stone chair which had been used for ages in the abbey there, at the coronations of Scottish Kings. Then, King Edward caused the great seal of Scotland, used since the late King's death, to be broken in four pieces, and placed in the English Treasury; and considered that he now had Scotland (according to the common saying) under his thumb.

Scotland had a strong will of its own yet, however. King Edward, determined that the Scottish King should not forget he was his vassal, summoned him repeatedly to come and defend himself and his Judges before the English Parliament when appeals from the decisions of Scottish courts of justice were being heard. At length, John Baliol, who had no great heart of his own, had so much heart put into him by the brave spirit of the Scottish people, who took this as a national insult, that he refused to come any more. Thereupon, the King further required him to help him in his war abroad (which was then in progress), and to give up, as security for his good behaviour in future, the three strong Scottish Castles of Jedburgh, Roxburgh, and Berwick. Nothing of this being done; on the contrary, the Scottish people concealing their King among their mountains in the Highlands and showing a determination to resist; Edward marched to Berwick with an army of thirty thousand foot, and four thousand horse; took the Castle, and slew its whole garrison, and the inhabitants of the town as well—men, women, and children. LORD WARRENNE, Earl of Surrey, then went on to the Castle of Dunbar, before which a battle was fought, and the whole Scottish army defeated with great slaughter. The victory being complete, the Earl of Surrey was left as Guardian of Scotland; the principal offices in that kingdom were given to Englishmen; the more powerful Scottish Nobles were obliged to come and live in England; the Scottish crown and sceptre were brought away; and even the old stone chair was carried off and placed in Westminster Abbey, where you may see it now. Baliol had the Tower of London lent him for a residence, with permission to range about within a circle of twenty miles. Three years afterwards he was allowed to go to Normandy, where he had estates, and where he passed the remaining six years of his life: far more happily, I dare say,

than he had lived for a long while in angry Scotland.

Now, there was, in the West of Scotland, a gentleman of small fortune, named WILLIAM WALLACE, the second son of a Scottish knight. He was a man of great size and great strength; he was very brave and daring; when he spoke to a body of his countrymen, he could rouse them in a wonderful manner by the power of his burning words; he loved Scotland dearly, and he hated England with his utmost might. The domineering conduct of the English who now held the places of trust in Scotland made them as intolerable to the proud Scottish people as they had been, under similar circumstances, to the Welsh; and no man in all Scotland regarded them with so much smothered rage as William Wallace. One day, an Englishman in office, little knowing what he was, affronted *him*. Wallace instantly struck him dead, and taking refuge among the rocks and hills, and there joining with his countryman, SIR WILLIAM DOUGLAS, who was also in arms against King Edward, became the most resolute and undaunted champion of a people struggling for their independence that ever lived upon the earth.

The English Guardian of the Kingdom fled before him, and, thus encouraged, the Scottish people revolted everywhere, and fell upon the English without mercy. The Earl of Surrey, by the King's commands, raised all the power of the Border-counties, and two English armies poured into Scotland. Only one Chief, in the face of those armies, stood by Wallace, who, with a force of forty thousand men, awaited the invaders at a place on the river Forth, within two miles of Stirling. Across the river there was only one poor wooden bridge, called the bridge of Kildean—so narrow, that but two men could cross it abreast. With his eyes upon this bridge, Wallace posted the greater part of his men among some rising grounds, and waited calmly. When the English army came up on the opposite bank of the river, messengers were sent forward to offer terms. Wallace sent them back with a defiance, in the name of the freedom of Scotland. Some of the officers of the Earl of Surrey in command of the English, with *their* eyes also on the bridge, advised him to be discreet and not hasty. He, however, urged to immediate battle by some other officers, and particularly by CRESSINGHAM, King Edward's treasurer, and a rash man, gave the word of command to advance. One thousand English crossed the bridge, two abreast; the Scottish troops were as motionless as stone images.

Two thousand English crossed; three thousand, four thousand, five. Not a feather, all this time, had been seen to stir among the Scottish bonnets. Now, they all fluttered. "Forward, one party, to the foot of the Bridge!" cried Wallace, "and let no more English cross! The rest, down with me on the five thousand who have come over, and cut them all to pieces!" It was done, in the sight of the whole remainder of the English army, who could give no help. Cressingham himself was killed, and the Scotch made whips for their horses of his skin.

King Edward was abroad at this time, and during the successes on the Scottish side which followed, and which enabled bold Wallace to win the whole country back again, and even to ravage the English borders. But, after a few winter months, the King returned, and took the field with more than his usual energy. One night, when a kick from his horse as they both lay on the ground together broke two of his ribs, and a cry arose that he was killed, he leaped into his saddle, regardless of the pain he suffered, and rode through the camp. Day then appearing, he gave the word (still, of course, in that bruised and aching state) Forward! and led his army on to near Falkirk, where the Scottish forces were seen drawn up on some stony ground, behind a morass. Here, he defeated Wallace, and killed fifteen thousand of his men. With the shattered remainder, Wallace drew back to Stirling; but, being pursued, set fire to the town that it might give no help to the English, and escaped. The inhabitants of Perth afterwards set fire to their houses for the same reason, and the King, unable to find provisions, was forced to withdraw his army.

Another ROBERT BRUCE, the grandson of him who had disputed the Scottish crown with Baliol, was now in arms against the King (that elder Bruce being dead), and also JOHN COMYN, Baliol's nephew. These two young men might agree in opposing Edward, but could agree in nothing else, as they were rivals for the throne of Scotland. Probably it was because they knew this, and knew what troubles must arise even if they could hope to get the better of the great English King, that the principal Scottish people applied to the Pope for his interference. The Pope, on the principle of losing nothing for want of trying to get it, very coolly claimed that Scotland belonged to him; but this was a little too much, and the Parliament in a friendly manner told him so.

In the spring time of the year one thousand

three hundred and three, the King sent SIR JOHN SEGRAVE, whom he made Governor of Scotland, with twenty thousand men, to reduce the rebels. Sir John was not as careful as he should have been, but encamped at Rosslyn, near Edinburgh, with his army divided into three parts. The Scottish forces saw their advantage; fell on each part separately; defeated each; and killed all the prisoners. Then, came the King himself once more, as soon as a great army could be raised; he passed through the whole north of Scotland, laying waste whatsoever came in his way; and he took up his winter quarters at Dunfermline. The Scottish cause now looked so hopeless, that Comyn and the other nobles made submission and received their pardons. Wallace alone stood out. He was invited to surrender, though on no distinct pledge that his life should be spared; but he still defied the ireful King, and lived among the steep crags of the Highland glens, where the eagles made their nests, and where the mountain torrents roared, and the white snow was deep, and the bitter winds blew round his unsheltered head, as he lay through many a pitch-dark night wrapped up in his plaid. Nothing could break his spirit; nothing could lower his courage; nothing could induce him to forget or to forgive his country's wrongs. Even when the Castle of Stirling, which had long held out, was besieged by the King with every kind of military engine then in use; even when the lead upon cathedral roofs was taken down to help to make them; even when the King, though an old man, commanded in the siege as if he were a youth, being so resolved to conquer; even when the brave garrison (then found with amazement to be not two hundred people, including several ladies) were starved and beaten out, and were made to submit on their knees, and with every form of disgrace that could aggravate their sufferings; even then, when there was not a ray of hope in Scotland, William Wallace was as proud and firm as if he had beheld the powerful and relentless Edward lying dead at his feet.

Who betrayed William Wallace in the end, is not quite certain. That he was betrayed—probably by an attendant—is too true. He was taken to the Castle of Dumbarton, under SIR JOHN MENTEITH, and thence to London, where the great fame of his bravery and resolution attracted immense concourses of people to behold him. He was tried in Westminster Hall, with a crown of laurel on his head—it is supposed because he was reported to have said that he ought to wear, or that he would wear, a

crown there—and was found guilty as a robber, a murderer, and a traitor. What they called a robber (he said to those who tried him) he was, because he had taken spoil from the King's men. What they called a murderer, he was, because he had slain an insolent Englishman. What they called a traitor, he was not, for he had never sworn allegiance to the King, and had ever scorned to do it. He was dragged at the tails of horses to West Smithfield, and there hanged on a high gallows, torn open before he was dead, beheaded, and quartered. His head was set upon a pole on London Bridge, his right arm was sent to Newcastle, his left arm to Berwick, his legs to Perth and Aberdeen. But, if King Edward had had his body cut into inches, and had sent every separate inch into a separate town, he could not have dispersed it half so far and wide as his fame. Wallace will be remembered in songs and stories, while there are songs and stories in the English tongue, and Scotland will hold him dear while her lakes and mountains last.

Released from this dreaded enemy, the King made a fairer plan of Government for Scotland, divided the offices of honour among Scottish gentlemen and English gentlemen, forgave past offences, and thought, in his old age, that his work was done.

But he deceived himself. Comyn and Bruce conspired, and made an appointment to meet at Dumfries, in the church of the Minorites. There is a story that Comyn was false to Bruce, and had informed against him to the King; that Bruce was warned of his danger and the necessity of flight, by receiving, one night as he sat at supper, from his friend the Earl of Gloucester, twelve pennies and a pair of spurs; that as he was riding angrily to keep his appointment (through a snow-storm, with his horse's shoes reversed that he might not be tracked), he met an evil-looking serving man, a messenger of Comyn, whom he killed, and concealed in whose dress he found letters that proved Comyn's treachery. However this may be, they were likely enough to quarrel in any case, being hot-headed rivals; and, whatever they quarrelled about, they certainly did quarrel in the church where they met, and Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, who fell upon the pavement. When Bruce came out, pale and disturbed, the friends who were waiting for him asked what was the matter? "I think I have killed Comyn," said he. "You only think so?" returned one of them; "I will make sure!" and going into the church, and finding him alive, stabbed him again and again. Knowing that the King would

never forgive this new deed of violence, the party then declared Bruce King of Scotland: got him crowned at Scone—without the chair; and set up the rebellious standard once again.

When the King heard of it he kindled with fiercer anger than he had ever shown yet. He caused the Prince of Wales and two hundred and seventy of the young nobility to be knighted—the trees in the Temple Gardens were cut down to make room for their tents, and they watched their armour all night, according to the old usage: some in the Temple Church: some in Westminster Abbey—and at the public Feast which then took place, he swore, by Heaven, and by two swans covered with gold network which his minstrels placed upon the table, that he would avenge the death of Comyn, and would punish the false Bruce. And before all the company, he charged the Prince his son, in case that he should die before accomplishing his vow, not to bury him until it was fulfilled. Next morning the Prince and the rest of the young Knights rode away to the Border-country to join the English army; and the King, now weak and sick, followed in a horse-litter.

Bruce, after losing a battle and undergoing many dangers and much misery, fled to Ireland, where he lay concealed through the winter. That winter, Edward passed in hunting down and executing Bruce's relations and adherents, sparing neither youth nor age, and showing no touch of pity or sign of mercy. In the following spring, Bruce reappeared and gained some victories. In these frays both sides were grievously cruel. For instance—Bruce's two brothers, being taken captives desperately wounded, were ordered by the King to instant execution. Bruce's friend Sir John Douglas, taking his own Castle of Douglas out of the hands of an English Lord, roasted the dead bodies of the slaughtered garrison in a great fire made of every movable within it; which dreadful cookery his men called the Douglas Larder. Bruce, still successful, however, drove the Earl of Pembroke and the Earl of Gloucester into the Castle of Ayr and laid siege to it.

The King, who had been laid up all the winter, but had directed the army from his sick-bed, now advanced to Carlisle, and there, causing the litter in which he had travelled to be placed in the Cathedral as an offering to Heaven, mounted his horse once more, and for the last time. He was now sixty-nine years old, and had reigned thirty-five years. He was so ill, that in four days he could go no more than six miles; still, even at that pace, he went on and resolutely kept his face towards the Border. At

length, he lay down at the village of Burgh-upon-Sands; and there, telling those around him to impress upon the Prince that he was to remember his father's vow, and was never to rest until he had thoroughly subdued Scotland, he yielded up his last breath.

CHAPTER XVII.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE SECOND.

KING Edward the Second, the first Prince of Wales, was twenty-three years old when his father died. There was a certain favourite of his, a young man from Gascony, named PIERS GAVESTON, of whom his father had so much disapproved that he had ordered him out of England, and had made his son swear by the side of his sick-bed, never to bring him back. But, the Prince no sooner found himself King, than he broke his oath, as so many other Princes and Kings did (they were far too ready to take oaths), and sent for his dear friend immediately.

Now, this same Gaveston was handsome enough, but was a reckless, insolent, audacious fellow. He was detested by the proud English Lords: not only because he had such power over the King, and made the Court such a dissipated place, but, also, because he could ride better than they at tournaments, and was used, in his impudence, to cut very bad jokes on them; calling one, the old hog; another, the stage-player; another, the Jew; another, the black dog of Ardenne. This was as poor wit as need be, but it made those Lords very wroth; and the surly Earl of Warwick, who was the black dog, swore that the time should come when Piers Gaveston should feel the black dog's teeth.

It was not come yet, however, nor did it seem to be coming. The King made him Earl of Cornwall, and gave him vast riches; and, when the King went over to France to marry the French Princess, ISABELLA, daughter of PHILIP LE BEL: who was said to be the most beautiful woman in the world: he made Gaveston, Regent of the Kingdom. His splendid marriage-ceremony in the Church of Our Lady at Boulogne, where there were four Kings and three Queens present (quite a pack of Court Cards, for I dare say the Knaves were not wanting), being over, he seemed to care little or nothing for his beautiful wife; but was wild with impatience to meet Gaveston again.

When he landed at home, he paid no attention to anybody else, but ran into the favourite's arms before a great concourse of people, and hugged him, and kissed him, and called him his brother. At the coronation which soon followed, Gaveston was the richest and brightest of all the glittering company there, and had the honour of carrying the crown. This made the proud Lords fiercer than ever; the people, too, despised the favourite, and would never call him Earl of Cornwall, however much he complained to the King and asked him to punish them for not doing so, but persisted in styling him plain Piers Gaveston.

The Barons were so unceremonious with the King in giving him to understand that they would not bear this favourite, that the King was obliged to send him out of the country. The favourite himself was made to take an oath (more oaths!) that he would never come back; and the Barons supposed him to be banished in disgrace, until they heard that he was appointed Governor of Ireland. Even this was not enough for the besotted King, who brought him home again in a year's time, and not only disgusted the Court and the people by his dotting folly; but offended his beautiful wife too, who never liked him afterwards.

He had now the old Royal want—of money—and the Barons had the new power of positively refusing to let him raise any. He summoned a Parliament at York; the Barons refused to make one, while the favourite was near him. He summoned another Parliament at Westminster, and sent Gaveston away. Then, the Barons came, completely armed, and appointed a committee of themselves to correct abuses in the state and in the King's household. He got some money on these conditions, and directly set off with Gaveston to the Border-country, where they spent it in idling away the time, and feasting, while Bruce made ready to drive the English out of Scotland. For, though the old King had even made this poor weak son of his swear (as some say) that he would not bury his bones, but would have them boiled clean in a caldron, and carried before the English army until Scotland was entirely subdued, the second Edward was so unlike the first that Bruce gained strength and power every day.

The committee of Nobles, after some months of deliberation, ordained that the King should henceforth call a Parliament together, once every year, and even twice if necessary, instead of summoning it only when he chose. Further, that Gaveston should once more be banished, and, this time, on pain of death if he ever came

back. The King's tears were of no avail; he was obliged to send his favourite to Flanders. As soon as he had done so, however, he dissolved the Parliament, with the low cunning of a mere fool, and set off to the North of England, thinking to get an army about him to oppose the Nobles. And once again he brought Gaveston home, and heaped upon him all the riches and titles of which the Barons had deprived him.

The Lords saw, now, that there was nothing for it but to put the favourite to death. They could have done so, legally, according to the terms of his banishment; but they did so, I am sorry to say, in a shabby manner. Led by the Earl of Lancaster, the King's cousin, they first of all attacked the King and Gaveston at Newcastle. They had time to escape by sea, and the mean King, having his precious Gaveston with him, was quite content to leave his lovely wife behind. When they were comparatively safe, they separated; the King went to York to collect a force of soldiers; and the favourite shut himself up, in the meantime, in Scarborough Castle overlooking the sea. This was what the Barons wanted. They knew that the Castle could not hold out; they attacked it, and made Gaveston surrender. He delivered himself up to the Earl of Pembroke—that Lord whom he had called the Jew—on the Earl's pledging his faith and knightly word, that no harm should happen to him and no violence be done him.

Now, it was agreed with Gaveston that he should be taken to the Castle of Wallingford, and there kept in honourable custody. They travelled as far as Dedington, near Banbury, where, in the Castle of that place, they stopped for a night to rest. Whether the Earl of Pembroke left his prisoner there, knowing what would happen, or really left him thinking no harm, and only going (as he pretended) to visit his wife, the Countess, who was in the neighbourhood, is no great matter now; in any case, he was bound as an honourable gentleman to protect his prisoner, and he did not do it. In the morning, while the favourite was yet in bed, he was required to dress himself and come down into the court-yard. He did so without any mistrust, but started and turned pale when he found it full of strange armed men. "I think you know me?" said their leader, also armed from head to foot. "I am the black dog of Ardenne!"

The time was come when Piers Gaveston was to feel the black dog's teeth indeed. They set him on a mule, and carried him, in mock state and with military music, to the black dog's

kennel—Warwick Castle—where a hasty council, composed of some great noblemen, considered what should be done with him. Some were for sparing him, but one loud voice—it was the black dog's bark, I dare say—sounded through the Castle Hall, uttering these words: "You have the fox in your power. Let him go now, and you must hunt him again."

They sentenced him to death. He threw himself at the feet of the Earl of Lancaster—the old hog—but the old hog was as savage as the dog. He was taken out upon the pleasant road, leading from Warwick to Coventry, where the beautiful river Avon, by which, long afterwards, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born and now lies buried, sparkled in the bright landscape of the beautiful May-day; and there they struck off his wretched head, and stained the dust with his blood.

When the King heard of this black deed, in his grief and rage he denounced relentless war against his Barons, and both sides were in arms for half a year. But, it then became necessary for them to join their forces against Bruce, who had used the time well while they were divided, and had now a great power in Scotland.

Intelligence was brought that Bruce was then besieging Stirling Castle, and that the Governor had been obliged to pledge himself to surrender it, unless he should be relieved before a certain day. Hereupon, the King ordered the nobles and their fighting-men to meet him at Berwick; but, the nobles cared so little for the King, and so neglected the summons, and lost time, that only on the day before that appointed for the surrender, did the King find himself at Stirling, and even then with a smaller force than he had expected. However, he had, altogether, a hundred thousand men, and Bruce had not more than forty thousand; but, Bruce's army was strongly posted in three square columns, on the ground lying between the Burn or Brook of Bannock and the walls of Stirling Castle.

On the very evening, when the King came up, Bruce did a brave act that encouraged his men. He was seen by a certain HENRY DE BOHUN, an English Knight, riding about before his army on a little horse, with a light battle-axe in his hand, and a crown of gold on his head. This English Knight, who was mounted on a strong war-horse, cased in steel, strongly armed, and able (as he thought) to overthrow Bruce by crushing him with his mere weight, set spurs to his great charger, rode on him, and made a thrust at him with his heavy spear. Bruce parried the thrust, and with one blow of his battle-axe split his skull.

The Scottish men did not forget this, next day when the battle raged. RANDOLPH, Bruce's valiant Nephew, rode, with the small body of men he commanded, into such a host of the English, all shining in polished armour in the sunlight, that they seemed to be swallowed up and lost, as if they had plunged into the sea. But, they fought so well, and did such dreadful execution, that the English staggered. Then came Bruce himself upon them, with all the rest of his army. While they were thus hard pressed and amazed, there appeared upon the hills what they supposed to be a new Scottish army, but what were really only the camp followers, in number fifteen thousand: whom Bruce had taught to show themselves at that place and time. The Earl of Gloucester, commanding the English horse, made a last rush to change the fortune of the day; but Bruce (like Jack the Giant-killer in the story) had had pits dug in the ground, and covered over with turfs and stakes. Into these, as they gave way beneath the weight of the horses, riders and horses rolled by hundreds. The English were completely routed; all their treasure, stores, and engines, were taken by the Scottish men; so many wag-gons and other wheeled vehicles were seized, that it is related that they would have reached, if they had been drawn out in a line, one hundred and eighty miles. The fortunes of Scotland were, for the time, completely changed; and never was a battle won, more famous upon Scottish ground, than this great battle of BANNOCKBURN.

Plague and famine succeeded in England; and still the powerless King and his disdainful Lords were always in contention. Some of the turbulent chiefs of Ireland made proposals to Bruce, to accept the rule of that country. He sent his brother Edward to them, who was crowned King of Ireland. He afterwards went himself to help his brother in his Irish wars, but his brother was defeated in the end and killed. Robert Bruce, returning to Scotland, still increased his strength there.

As the King's ruin had begun in a favourite, so it seemed likely to end in one. He was too poor a creature to rely at all upon himself; and his new favourite was one HUGH LE DESPENSER, the son of a gentleman of ancient family. Hugh was handsome and brave, but he was the favourite of a weak King, whom no man cared a rush for, and that was a dangerous place to hold. The Nobles leagued against him, because the King liked him; and they lay in wait, both for his ruin and his father's. Now, the King had married him to the daughter of the

late Earl of Gloucester, and had given both him and his father great possessions in Wales. In their endeavours to extend these, they gave violent offence to an angry Welsh gentleman, named JOHN DE MOWBRAY, and to divers other angry Welsh gentlemen, who resorted to arms, took their castles, and seized their estates. The Earl of Lancaster had first placed the favourite (who was a poor relation of his own) at Court, and he considered his own dignity offended by the preference he received and the honours he acquired; so he, and the Barons who were his friends, joined the Welshmen, marched on London, and sent a message to the King demanding to have the favourite and his father banished. At first, the King unaccountably took it into his head to be spirited, and to send them a bold reply; but when they quartered themselves around Holborn and Clerkenwell, and went down, armed, to the Parliament at Westminster, he gave way, and complied with their demands.

His turn of triumph came sooner than he expected. It arose out of an accidental circumstance. The beautiful Queen happening to be travelling, came one night to one of the royal castles, and demanded to be lodged and entertained there until morning. The governor of this castle, who was one of the enraged lords, was away, and in his absence, his wife refused admission to the Queen; a scuffle took place among the common men on either side, and some of the royal attendants were killed. The people, who cared nothing for the King, were very angry that their beautiful Queen should be thus rudely treated in her own dominions; and the King, taking advantage of this feeling, besieged the castle, took it, and then called the two Despensers home. Upon this, the confederate lords and the Welshmen went over to Bruce. The King encountered them at Boroughbridge, gained the victory, and took a number of distinguished prisoners; among them, the Earl of Lancaster, now an old man, upon whose destruction he was resolved. This Earl was taken to his own castle of Pontefract, and there tried and found guilty by an unfair court appointed for the purpose; he was not even allowed to speak in his own defence. He was insulted, pelted, mounted on a starved pony without saddle or bridle, carried out, and beheaded. Eight-and-twenty knights were hanged, drawn, and quartered. When the King had despatched this bloody work, and had made a fresh and a long truce with Bruce, he took the Despensers into greater favour than ever, and made the father Earl of Winchester.

One prisoner, and an important one, who was

taken at Boroughbridge, made his escape, however, and turned the tide against the King. This was ROGER MORTIMER, always resolutely opposed to him, who was sentenced to death, and placed for safe custody in the Tower of London. He treated his guards to a quantity of wine into which he had put a sleeping potion; and, when they were insensible, broke out of his dungeon, got into a kitchen, climbed up the chimney, let himself down from the roof of the building with a rope-ladder, passed the sentries, got down to the river, and made away in a boat to where servants and horses were waiting for him. He finally escaped to France, where CHARLES LE BEL, the brother of the beautiful Queen, was King. Charles sought to quarrel with the King of England, on pretence of his not having come to do him homage at his coronation. It was proposed that the beautiful Queen should go over to arrange the dispute; she went, and wrote home to the King, that as he was sick and could not come to France himself, perhaps it would be better to send over the young Prince, their son, who was only twelve years old, who could do homage to her brother in his stead, and in whose company she would immediately return. The King sent him: but, both he and the Queen remained at the French Court, and Roger Mortimer became the Queen's lover.

When the King wrote, again and again, to the Queen to come home, she did not reply that she despised him too much to live with him any more (which was the truth), but said she was afraid of the two Despensers. In short, her design was to overthrow the favourites' power, and the King's power, such as it was, and invade England. Having obtained a French force of two thousand men, and being joined by all the English exiles then in France, she landed, within a year, at Orwell, in Suffolk, where she was immediately joined by the Earls of Kent and Norfolk, the King's two brothers; by other powerful noblemen; and lastly, by the first English general who was despatched to check her: who went over to her with all his men. The people of London, receiving these tidings, would do nothing for the King, but broke open the Tower, let out all his prisoners, and threw up their caps and hurrahd for the beautiful Queen.

The King, with his two favourites, fled to Bristol, where he left old Despenser in charge of the town and castle, while he went on with the son to Wales. The Bristol men being opposed to the King, and it being impossible to hold the town with enemies everywhere within the walls, Despenser yielded it up on the third day, and was instantly brought to trial for

having traitorously influenced what was called "the King's mind"—though I doubt if the King ever had any. He was a venerable old man, upwards of ninety years of age, but his age gained no respect or mercy. He was hanged, torn open while he was yet alive, cut up into pieces, and thrown to the dogs. His son was soon taken, tried at Hereford before the same judge on a long series of foolish charges, found guilty, and hanged upon a gallows fifty feet high, with a chaplet of nettles round his head. His poor old father and he were innocent enough of any worse crimes than the crime of having been friends of a King, on whom, as a mere man, they would never have deigned to cast a favourable look. It is a bad crime, I know, and leads to worse; but, many lords and gentlemen—I even think some ladies, too, if I recollect right—have committed it in England, who have neither been given to the dogs, nor hanged up fifty feet high.

The wretched King was running here and there, all this time, and never getting anywhere in particular, until he gave himself up, and was taken off to Kenilworth Castle. When he was safely lodged there, the Queen went to London and met the Parliament. And the Bishop of Hereford, who was the most skilful of her friends, said, What was to be done now? Here was an imbecile, indolent, miserable King upon the throne; wouldn't it be better to take him off, and put his son there instead? I don't know whether the Queen really pitied him at this pass, but she began to cry; so, the Bishop said, Well, my Lords and Gentlemen, what do you think, upon the whole, of sending down to Kenilworth, and seeing if His Majesty (God bless him, and forbid we should depose him!) won't resign?

My Lords and Gentlemen thought it a good notion, so a deputation of them went down to Kenilworth; and there the King came into the great hall of the Castle, commonly dressed in a poor black gown; and when he saw a certain bishop among them, fell down, poor feeble-headed man, and made a wretched spectacle of himself. Somebody lifted him up, and then SIR WILLIAM TRUSSEL, the Speaker of the House of Commons, almost frightened him to death by making him a tremendous speech to the effect that he was no longer a King, and that everybody renounced allegiance to him. After which, SIR THOMAS BLOUNT, the Steward of the Household, nearly finished him, by coming forward and breaking his white wand—which was a ceremony only performed at a King's death. Being asked in this pressing manner

what he thought of resigning, the King said he thought it was the best thing he could do. So, he did it, and they proclaimed his son next day.

I wish I could close his history by saying that he lived a harmless life in the Castle and the Castle gardens at Kenilworth, many years—that he had a favourite, and plenty to eat and drink—and, having that, wanted nothing. But he was shamefully humiliated. He was outraged, and slighted, and had dirty water from ditches given him to shave with, and wept and said he would have clean warm water, and was altogether very miserable. He was moved from this castle to that castle, and from that castle to the other castle, because this lord or that lord, or the other lord, was too kind to him; until at last he came to Berkeley Castle, near the River Severn, where (the Lord Berkeley being then ill and absent) he fell into the hands of two black ruffians, called THOMAS GOURNAY and WILLIAM OGLE.

One night—it was the night of September the twenty-first, one thousand three hundred and twenty-seven—dreadful screams were heard, by the startled people in the neighbouring town, ringing through the thick walls of the Castle, and the dark deep night; and they said, as they were thus horribly awakened from their sleep, "May Heaven be merciful to the King; for those cries forebode that no good is being done to him in his dismal prison!" Next morning he was dead—not bruised, or stabbed, or marked upon the body, but much distorted in the face; and it was whispered afterwards, that those two villains, Gournay and Ogle, had burnt up his inside with a red-hot iron.

If you ever come near Gloucester, and see the centre tower of its beautiful Cathedral, with its four rich pinnacles, rising lightly in the air; you may remember that the wretched Edward the Second was buried in the old abbey of that ancient city, at forty-three years old, after being for nineteen years and a half a perfectly incapable King.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE THIRD.



ROGER MORTIMER, the Queen's lover (who escaped to France in the last chapter), was far from profiting by the examples he had had of the fate of favourites. Having, through the Queen's influence, come into possession of the estates of the two Despencers, he became extremely proud and ambitious, and sought to be the real ruler of

England. The young King, who was crowned at fourteen years of age with all the usual solemnities, resolved not to bear this, and soon pursued Mortimer to his ruin.

The people themselves were not fond of Mortimer—first, because he was a Royal favourite; secondly, because he was supposed to have helped to make a peace with Scotland which now took place, and in virtue of which the young King's sister Joan, only seven years old, was promised in marriage to David, the son and heir of Robert Bruce, who was only five years old. The nobles hated Mortimer because of his pride, riches, and power. They went so far as to take up arms against him; but were obliged to submit. The Earl of Kent, one of those who did so, but who afterwards went over to Mortimer and the Queen, was made an example of in the following cruel manner:

He seems to have been anything but a wise old earl; and he was persuaded by the agents of the favourite and the Queen, that poor King Edward the Second was not really dead; and thus was betrayed into writing letters favouring his rightful claim to the throne. This was made out to be high treason, and he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be executed. They took the poor old lord outside the town of Winchester, and there kept him waiting some three or four hours until they could find somebody to cut off his head. At last, a convict said he would do it, if the government would pardon him in return; and they gave him the pardon; and at one blow he put the Earl of Kent out of his last suspense.

While the Queen was in France, she had found a lovely and good young lady, named Philippa, who she thought would make an excellent wife for her son. The young King married this lady, soon after he came to the throne; and her first child, Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards became celebrated, as we shall presently see, under the famous title of EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE.

The young King, thinking the time ripe for the downfall of Mortimer, took counsel with Lord Montacute how he should proceed. A Parliament was going to be held at Nottingham, and that lord recommended that the favourite should be seized by night in Nottingham Castle, where he was sure to be. Now this, like many other things, was more easily said than done; because, to guard against treachery, the great gates of the Castle were locked every night, and the great keys were carried up-stairs to the Queen, who laid them under her own pillow. But the Castle had a governor, and the governor

being Lord Montacute's friend, confided to him how he knew of a secret passage under-ground, hidden from observation by the weeds and brambles with which it was overgrown; and how, through that passage, the conspirators might enter in the dead of the night, and go straight to Mortimer's room. Accordingly, upon a certain dark night, at midnight, they made their way through this dismal place: startling the rats, and frightening the owls and bats: and came safely to the bottom of the main tower of the Castle, where the King met them, and took them up a profoundly-dark staircase in a deep silence. They soon heard the voice of Mortimer in council with some friends; and bursting into the room with a sudden noise, took him prisoner. The Queen cried out from her bed-chamber, "Oh, my sweet son, my dear son, spare my gentle Mortimer!" They carried him off, however; and, before the next Parliament, accused him of having made differences between the young King and his mother, and of having brought about the death of the Earl of Kent, and even of the late King; for, as you know by this time, when they wanted to get rid of a man in those old days, they were not very particular of what they accused him. Mortimer was found guilty of all this, and was sentenced to be hanged at Tyburn. The King shut his mother up in genteel confinement, where she passed the rest of her life; and now he became King in earnest.

The first effort he made was to conquer Scotland. The English lords who had lands in Scotland, finding that their rights were not respected under the late peace, made war on their own account: choosing for their general, Edward, the son of John Baliol, who made such a vigorous fight, that in less than two months he won the whole Scottish Kingdom. He was joined, when thus triumphant, by the King and Parliament; and he and the King in person besieged the Scottish forces in Berwick. The whole Scottish army coming to the assistance of their countrymen, such a furious battle ensued, that thirty thousand men are said to have been killed in it. Baliol was then crowned King of Scotland, doing homage to the King of England; but little came of his successes after all, for the Scottish men rose against him, within no very long time, and David Bruce came back within ten years and took his kingdom.

France was a far richer country than Scotland, and the King had a much greater mind to conquer it. So, he let Scotland alone, and pretended that he had a claim to the French throne in right of his mother. He had, in reality, no claim at all; but that mattered little

in those times. He brought over to his cause many little princes and sovereigns, and even courted the alliance of the people of Flanders—a busy, working community, who had very small respect for kings, and whose head man was a brewer. With such forces as he raised by these means, Edward invaded France; but he did little by that, except run into debt in carrying on the war to the extent of three hundred thousand pounds. The next year he did better; gaining a great sea-fight in the harbour of Sluys. This success, however, was very short-lived, for the Flemings took fright at the siege of Saint Omer and ran away, leaving their weapons and baggage behind them. Philip, the French King, coming up with his army, and Edward being very anxious to decide the war, proposed to settle the difference by single combat with him, or by a fight of one hundred knights on each side. The French King said, he thanked him; but being very well as he was, he would rather not. So, after some skirmishing and talking, a short peace was made.

It was soon broken by King Edward's favouring the cause of John, Earl of Montford; a French nobleman, who asserted a claim of his own against the French King, and offered to do homage to England for the Crown of France, if he could obtain it through England's help. This French lord, himself, was soon defeated by the French King's son, and shut up in a tower in Paris; but his wife, a courageous and beautiful woman, who is said to have had the courage of a man, and the heart of a lion, assembled the people of Brittany, where she then was; and, showing them her infant son, made many pathetic entreaties to them not to desert her and their young Lord. They took fire at this appeal, and rallied round her in the strong castle of Hennebon. Here she was not only besieged without by the French under Charles de Blois, but was endangered within by a dreary old bishop, who was always representing to the people what horrors they must undergo if they were faithful—first from famine, and afterwards from fire and sword. But this noble lady, whose heart never failed her, encouraged her soldiers by her own example; went from post to post like a great general; even mounted on horseback fully armed, and, issuing from the castle by a by-path, fell upon the French camp, set fire to the tents, and threw the whole force into disorder. This done, she got safely back to Hennebon again, and was received with loud shouts of joy by the defenders of the castle, who had given her up for lost. As they were now very short of pro-

visions, however, and as they could not dine off enthusiasm, and as the old bishop was always saying, "I told you what it would come to!" they began to lose heart, and to talk of yielding the castle up. The brave Countess retiring to an upper room and looking with great grief out to sea, where she expected relief from England, saw, at this very time, the English ships in the distance, and was relieved and rescued! Sir Walter Manning, the English commander, so admired her courage, that, being come into the castle with the English knights, and having made a feast there, he assaulted the French by way of dessert, and beat them off triumphantly. Then he and the knights came back to the castle with great joy; and the Countess who had watched them from a high tower, thanked them with all her heart, and kissed them every one.

This noble lady distinguished herself afterwards in a sea-fight with the French off Guernsey, when she was on her way to England to ask for more troops. Her great spirit roused another lady, the wife of another French lord (whom the French King very barbarously murdered), to distinguish herself scarcely less. The time was fast coming, however, when Edward, Prince of Wales, was to be the great star of this French and English war.

It was in the month of July, in the year one thousand three hundred and forty-six, when the King embarked at Southampton for France, with an army of about thirty thousand men in all, attended by the Prince of Wales and by several of the chief nobles. He landed at La Hogue in Normandy; and, burning and destroying as he went, according to custom, advanced up the left bank of the River Seine, and fired the small towns even close to Paris; but, being watched from the right bank of the river by the French King and all his army, it came to this at last, that Edward found himself, on Saturday the twenty-sixth of August, one thousand three hundred and forty-six, on a rising ground behind the little French village of Crecy, face to face with the French King's force. And, although the French King had an enormous army—in number more than eight times his—he there resolved to beat him or be beaten.

The young Prince, assisted by the Earl of Oxford and the Earl of Warwick, led the first division of the English army; two other great Earls led the second; and the King, the third. When the morning dawned, the King received the sacrament, and heard prayers, and then, mounted on horseback with a white wand in his hand, rode from company to company, and rank

to rank, cheering and encouraging both officers and men. Then the whole army breakfasted, each man sitting on the ground where he had stood; and then they remained quietly on the ground with their weapons ready.

Up came the French King with all his great force. It was dark and angry weather; there was an eclipse of the sun; there was a thunderstorm, accompanied with tremendous rain; the frightened birds flew screaming above the soldiers' heads. A certain captain in the French army advised the French King, who was by no means cheerful, not to begin the battle until the morrow. The King, taking this advice, gave the word to halt. But, those behind not understanding it, or desiring to be foremost with the rest, came pressing on. The roads for a great distance were covered with this immense army, and with the common people from the villages, who were flourishing their rude weapons, and making a great noise. Owing to these circumstances, the French army advanced in the greatest confusion; every French lord doing what he liked with his own men, and putting out the men of every other French lord.

Now, their King relied strongly upon a great body of cross-bowmen from Genoa; and these he ordered to the front to begin the battle, on finding that he could not stop it. They shouted once, they shouted twice, they shouted three times, to alarm the English archers; but, the English would have heard them shout three thousand times and would have never moved. At last the cross-bowmen went forward a little, and began to discharge their bolts; upon which, the English let fly such a hail of arrows, that the Genoese speedily made off—for their cross-bows, besides being heavy to carry, required to be wound up with a handle, and consequently took time to re-load; the English, on the other hand, could discharge their arrows almost as fast as the arrows could fly.

When the French King saw the Genoese turning, he cried out to his men to kill those scoundrels, who were doing harm instead of service. This increased the confusion. Meanwhile the English archers, continuing to shoot as fast as ever, shot down great numbers of the French soldiers and knights; whom certain sly Cornishmen and Welshmen, from the English army, creeping along the ground, despatched with great knives.

The Prince and his division were at this time so hard-pressed, that the Earl of Warwick sent a message to the King, who was overlooking the battle from a windmill, beseeching him to send more aid.

"Is my son killed?" said the King.

"No, sire, please God," returned the messenger.

"Is he wounded?" said the King.

"No, sire."

"Is he thrown to the ground?" said the King.

"No, sire, not so; but, he is very hard-pressed."

"Then," said the King, "go back to those who sent you, and tell them I shall send no aid; because I set my heart upon my son proving himself this day a brave knight, and because I am resolved, please God, that the honour of a great victory shall be his!"

These bold words, being reported to the Prince and his division, so raised their spirits, that they fought better than ever. The King of France charged gallantly with his men many times; but it was of no use. Night closing in, his horse was killed under him by an English arrow, and the knights and nobles who had clustered thick about him early in the day, were now completely scattered. At last, some of his few remaining followers led him off the field by force, since he would not retire of himself, and they journeyed away to Amiens. The victorious English, lighting their watch-fires, made merry on the field, and the King, riding to meet his gallant son, took him in his arms, kissed him, and told him that he had acted nobly, and proved himself worthy of the day and of the crown. While it was yet night, King Edward was hardly aware of the great victory he had gained; but, next day, it was discovered that eleven princes, twelve hundred knights, and thirty thousand common men lay dead upon the French side. Among these was the King of Bohemia, an old blind man; who, having been told that his son was wounded in the battle, and that no force could stand against the Black Prince, called to him two knights, put himself on horseback between them, fastened the three bridles together, and dashed in among the English, where he was presently slain. He bore as his crest three white ostrich feathers, with the motto *Ich dien*, signifying in English "I serve." This crest and motto were taken by the Prince of Wales in remembrance of that famous day, and have been borne by the Prince of Wales ever since.

Five days after this great battle, the King laid siege to Calais. This siege—ever afterwards memorable—lasted nearly a year. In order to starve the inhabitants out, King Edward built so many wooden houses for the lodgings of his troops, that it is said their quarters looked like a second Calais suddenly sprung up around the

first. Early in the siege, the governor of the town drove out what he called the useless mouths, to the number of seventeen hundred persons, men and women, young and old. King Edward allowed them to pass through his lines, and even fed them, and dismissed them with money; but, later in the siege, he was not so merciful—five hundred more, who were afterwards driven out, dying of starvation and misery. The garrison were so hard-pressed at last, that they sent a letter to King Philip, telling him that they had eaten all the horses, all the dogs, and all the rats and mice that could be found in the place; and, that if he did not relieve them, they must either surrender to the English, or eat one another. Philip made one effort to give them relief; but they were so hemmed in by the English power, that he could not succeed, and was fain to leave the place. Upon this they hoisted the English flag, and surrendered to King Edward. "Tell your general," said he to the humble messengers who came out of the town, "that I require to have sent here, six of the most distinguished citizens, bare-legged, and in their shirts, with ropes about their necks; and let those six men bring with them the keys of the castle and the town."

When the Governor of Calais related this to the people in the Market-place, there was great weeping and distress; in the midst of which, one worthy citizen, named Eustace de Saint Pierre, rose up and said, that if the six men required were not sacrificed, the whole population would be; therefore he offered himself as the first. Encouraged by this bright example, five other worthy citizens rose up one after another, and offered themselves to save the rest. The Governor, who was too badly wounded to be able to walk, mounted a poor old horse that had not been eaten, and conducted these good men to the gate, while all the people cried and mourned.

Edward received them wrathfully, and ordered the heads of the whole six to be struck off. However, the good Queen fell upon her knees, and besought the King to give them up to her. The King replied, "I wish you had been somewhere else; but I cannot refuse you." So she had them properly dressed, made a feast for them, and sent them back with a handsome present, to the great rejoicing of the whole camp. I hope the people of Calais loved the daughter to whom she gave birth soon afterwards, for her gentle mother's sake.

Now came that terrible disease, the Plague, into Europe, hurrying from the heart of China; and killed the wretched people—especially the

poor—in such enormous numbers, that one-half of the inhabitants of England are related to have died of it. It killed the cattle, in great numbers, too; and so few working men remained alive, that there were not enough left to till the ground.

After eight years of differing and quarrelling, the Prince of Wales again invaded France with an army of sixty thousand men. He went through the south of the country, burning and plundering wheresoever he went; while his father, who had still the Scottish war upon his hands, did the like in Scotland, but was harassed and worried in his retreat from that country by the Scottish men, who repaid his cruelties with interest.

The French King, Philip, was now dead, and was succeeded by his son John. The Black Prince, called by that name from the colour of the armour he wore to set off his fair complexion, continuing to burn and destroy in France, roused John into determined opposition; and so cruel had the Black Prince been in his campaign, and so severely had the French peasants suffered, that he could not find one who, for love, or money, or the fear of death, would tell him what the French King was doing, or where he was. Thus it happened that he came upon the French King's forces, all of a sudden, near the town of Poitiers, and found that the whole neighbouring country was occupied by a vast French army. "God help us!" said the Black Prince, "we must make the best of it."

So, on a Sunday morning, the eighteenth of September, the Prince—whose army was now reduced to ten thousand men in all—prepared to give battle to the French King, who had sixty thousand horse alone. While he was so engaged, there came riding from the French camp, a Cardinal, who had persuaded John to let him offer terms, and try to save the shedding of Christian blood. "Save my honour," said the Prince to this good priest, "and save the honour of my army, and I will make any reasonable terms." He offered to give up all the towns, castles, and prisoners, he had taken, and to swear to make no war in France for seven years; but, as John would hear of nothing but his surrender, with a hundred of his chief knights, the treaty was broken off, and the Prince said quietly—"God defend the right; we shall fight to-morrow."

Therefore, on the Monday morning, at break of day, the two armies prepared for battle. The English were posted in a strong place, which could only be approached by one narrow lane,

skirted by hedges on both sides. The French attacked them by this lane; but were so galled and slain by English arrows from behind the hedges, that they were forced to retreat. Then went six hundred English bowmen round about, and, coming upon the rear of the French army, rained arrows on them thick and fast. The French knights, thrown into confusion, quitted their banners and dispersed in all directions. Said Sir John Chandos to the Prince, "Advance, noble Prince, and the day is yours. The King of France is so valiant a gentleman, that I know he will never fly, and may be taken prisoner." Said the Prince to this, "Advance, English banners, in the name of God and St. George!" and on they pressed until they came up with the French King, fighting fiercely with his battle-axe, and, when all his nobles had forsaken him, attended faithfully to the last by his youngest son Philip, only sixteen years of age. Father and son fought well, and the King had already two wounds in his face, and had been beaten down, when he at last delivered himself to a banished French knight, and gave him his right-hand glove in token that he had done so.

The Black Prince was generous as well as brave, and he invited his royal prisoner to supper in his tent, and waited upon him at table, and, when they afterwards rode into London in a gorgeous procession, mounted the French King on a fine cream-coloured horse, and rode at his side on a little pony. This was all very kind, but I think it was, perhaps, a little theatrical too, and has been made more meritorious than it deserved to be; especially as I am inclined to think that the greatest kindness to the King of France would have been not to have shown him to the people at all. However, it must be said, for these acts of politeness, that, in course of time, they did much to soften the horrors of war and the passions of conquerors. It was a long, long time before the common soldiers began to have the benefit of such courtly deeds; but they did at last; and thus it is possible that a poor soldier who asked for quarter at the battle of Waterloo, or any other such great fight, may have owed his life indirectly to Edward the Black Prince.

At this time there stood in the Strand, in London, a palace called the Savoy, which was given up to the captive King of France and his son for their residence. As the King of Scotland had now been King Edward's captive for eleven years too, his success was, at this time, tolerably complete. The Scottish business was settled by the prisoner being released under the

title of Sir David, King of Scotland, and by his engaging to pay a large ransom. The state of France encouraged England to propose harder terms to that country, where the people rose against the unspeakable cruelty and barbarity of its nobles; where the nobles rose in turn against the people; where the most frightful outrages were committed on all sides; and where the insurrection of the peasants, called the insurrection of the Jacquerie, from Jacques, a common Christian name among the country people of France, awakened terrors and hatreds that have scarcely yet passed away. A treaty called the Great Peace, was at last signed, under which King Edward agreed to give up the greater part of his conquests, and King John to pay, within six years, a ransom of three million crowns of gold. He was so beset by his own nobles and courtiers for having yielded to these conditions—though they could help him to no better—that he came back of his own will to his old palace-prison of the Savoy, and there died.

There was a Sovereign of Castile at that time, called PEDRO THE CRUEL, who deserved the name remarkably well: having committed, among other cruelties, a variety of murders. This amiable monarch being driven from his throne for his crimes, went to the province of Bordeaux, where the Black Prince—now married to his cousin JOAN, a pretty widow—was residing, and besought his help. The Prince, who took to him much more kindly than a prince of such fame ought to have taken to such a ruffian, readily listened to his fair promises, and agreeing to help him, sent secret orders to some troublesome disbanded soldiers of his and his father's, who called themselves the Free Companions, and who had been a pest to the French people, for some time, to aid this Pedro. The Prince, himself, going into Spain to head the army of relief, soon set Pedro on his throne again—where he no sooner found himself, than, of course, he behaved like the villain he was, broke his word without the least shame, and abandoned all the promises he had made to the Black Prince.

Now, it had cost the Prince a good deal of money to pay soldiers to support this murderous King; and finding himself, when he came back disgusted to Bordeaux, not only in bad health, but deeply in debt, he began to tax his French subjects to pay his creditors. They appealed to the French King, CHARLES; war again broke out; and the French town of Limoges, which the Prince had greatly benefited, went over to the French King. Upon this he ravaged the province of which it was the capital; burnt, and

plundered, and killed in the old sickening way ; and refused mercy to the prisoners, men, women, and children taken in the offending town, though he was so ill and so much in need of pity himself from Heaven, that he was carried in a litter. He lived to come home and make himself

popular with the people and Parliament, and he died on Trinity Sunday, the eighth of June, one thousand three hundred and seventy-six, at forty-six years old.

The whole nation mourned for him as one of the most renowned and beloved princes it had



KING JOHN OF FRANCE AT THE BATTLE OF POITIERS.

ever had ; and he was buried with great lamentations, in Canterbury Cathedral. Near to the tomb of Edward the Confessor, his monument, with his figure, carved in stone, and represented in the old black armour, lying on its back, may be seen at this day, with an ancient coat of mail,

a helmet, and a pair of gauntlets hanging from a beam above it, which most people like to believe were once worn by the Black Prince.

King Edward did not outlive his renowned son, long. He was old, and one Alice Perrers, a beautiful lady, had contrived to make him so

fond of her in his old age, that he could refuse her nothing, and made himself ridiculous. She little deserved his love, or—what I dare say she valued a great deal more—the jewels of the late Queen, which he gave her among other rich presents. She took the very ring from his finger on the morning of the day when he died, and left him to be pillaged by his faithless servants. Only one good priest was true to him, and attended him to the last.

Besides being famous for the great victories I have related, the reign of King Edward the Third was rendered memorable in better ways, by the growth of architecture and the erection of Windsor Castle. In better ways still, by the rising up of WICKLIFFE, originally a poor parish priest: who devoted himself to exposing, with wonderful power and success, the ambition and corruption of the Pope, and of the whole church of which he was the head.

Some of those Flemings were induced to come to England in this reign too, and to settle in Norfolk, where they made better woollen cloths than the English had ever had before. The Order of the Garter (a very fine thing in its way, but hardly so important as good clothes for the nation) also dates from this period. The King is said to have picked up a lady's garter at a ball, and to have said, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*—in English, "Evil be to him who evil thinks of it." The courtiers were usually glad to imitate what the King said or did, and hence from a slight incident the Order of the Garter was instituted, and became a great dignity. So the story goes.

CHAPTER XIX.

ENGLAND UNDER RICHARD THE SECOND.

RICHARD, son of the Black Prince, a boy eleven years of age, succeeded to the Crown under the title of King Richard the Second. The whole English nation were ready to admire him for the sake of his brave father. As to the lords and ladies about the Court, they declared him to be the most beautiful, the wisest, and the best—even of princes—whom the lords and ladies about the Court, generally declare to be the most beautiful, the wisest, and the best of mankind. To flatter a poor boy in this base manner was not a very likely way to develop whatever good was in him; and it brought him to anything but a good or happy end.

The Duke of Lancaster, the young King's uncle—commonly called John of Gaunt, from having been born at Ghent, which the common people so pronounced—was supposed to have some thoughts of the throne himself; but, as he was not popular, and the memory of the Black Prince was, he submitted to his nephew.

The war with France being still unsettled, the Government of England wanted money to provide for the expenses that might arise out of it; accordingly a certain tax, called the Poll-tax, which had originated in the last reign, was ordered to be levied on the people. This was a tax on every person in the kingdom, male and female, above the age of fourteen, of three groats (or three fourpenny pieces) a year; clergymen were charged more, and only beggars were exempt.

I have no need to repeat that the common people of England had long been suffering under great oppression. They were still the mere slaves of the lords of the land on which they lived, and were on most occasions harshly and unjustly treated. But, they had begun by this time to think very seriously of not bearing quite so much; and, probably, were emboldened by that French insurrection I mentioned in the last chapter.

The people of Essex rose against the Poll-tax, and being severely handled by the government officers, killed some of them. At this very time one of the tax-collectors, going his rounds from house to house, at Dartford in Kent came to the cottage of one WAT, a tiler by trade, and claimed the tax upon his daughter. Her mother, who was at home, declared that she was under the age of fourteen; upon that, the collector (as other collectors had already done in different parts of England) behaved in a savage way, and brutally insulted Wat Tyler's daughter. The daughter screamed, the mother screamed. Wat the Tiler, who was at work not far off, ran to the spot, and did what any honest father under such provocation might have done—struck the collector dead at a blow.

Instantly the people of that town uprose as one man. They made Wat Tyler their leader; they joined with the people of Essex, who were in arms under a priest called JACK STRAW; they took out of prison another priest named JOHN BALL; and gathering in numbers as they went along, advanced, in a great confused army of poor men, to Blackheath. It is said that they wanted to abolish all property, and to declare all men equal. I do not think this very likely; because they stopped the travellers on the roads and made them swear to be true to

King Richard and the people. Nor were they at all disposed to injure those who had done them no harm, merely because they were of high station; for, the King's mother, who had to pass through their camp at Blackheath, on her way to her young son, lying for safety in the Tower of London, had merely to kiss a few dirty-faced rough-bearded men who were noisily fond of royalty, and so got away in perfect safety. Next day the whole mass marched on to London Bridge.

There was a drawbridge in the middle, which WILLIAM WALWORTH the Mayor caused to be raised to prevent their coming into the city; but they soon terrified the citizens into lowering it again, and spread themselves, with great uproar, over the streets. They broke open the prisons; they burned the papers in Lambeth Palace; they destroyed the DUKE OF LANCASTER'S Palace, the Savoy, in the Strand, said to be the most beautiful and splendid in England; they set fire to the books and documents in the Temple; and made a great riot. Many of these outrages were committed in drunkenness; since those citizens, who had well-filled cellars, were only too glad to throw them open to save the rest of their property; but even the drunken rioters were very careful to steal nothing. They were so angry with one man, who was seen to take a silver cup at the Savoy Palace, and put it in his breast, that they drowned him in the river, cup and all.

The young King had been taken out to treat with them before they committed these excesses; but, he and the people about him were so frightened by the riotous shouts, that they got back to the Tower in the best way they could. This made the insurgents bolder; so they went on rioting away, striking off the heads of those who did not, at a moment's notice, declare for King Richard and the people; and killing as many of the unpopular persons whom they supposed to be their enemies as they could by any means lay hold of. In this manner they passed one very violent day, and then proclamation was made that the King would meet them at Mile-end, and grant their requests.

The rioters went to Mile-end to the number of sixty thousand, and the King met them there, and to the King the rioters peaceably proposed four conditions. First, that neither they, nor their children, nor any coming after them, should be made slaves any more. Secondly, that the rent of land should be fixed at a certain price in money, instead of being paid in service. Thirdly, that they should have liberty to buy and sell in all markets and public places, like other free men. Fourthly, that they should be

pardoned for past offences. Heaven knows, there was nothing very unreasonable in these proposals! The young King deceitfully pretended to think so, and kept thirty clerks up, all night, writing out a charter accordingly.

Now, Wat Tyler himself wanted more than this. He wanted the entire abolition of the forest laws. He was not at Mile-end with the rest, but, while that meeting was being held, broke into the Tower of London and slew the archbishop and the treasurer, for whose heads the people had cried out loudly the day before. He and his men even thrust their swords into the bed of the Princess of Wales while the Princess was in it, to make certain that none of their enemies were concealed there.

So, Wat and his men still continued armed, and rode about the city. Next morning, the King with a small train of some sixty gentlemen—among whom was WALWORTH the Mayor—rode into Smithfield, and saw Wat and his people at a little distance. Says Wat to his men, "There is the King. I will go speak with him, and tell him what we want."

Straightway Wat rode up to him, and began to talk. "King," says Wat, "dost thou see all my men there?"

"Ah," says the King. "Why?"

"Because," says Wat, "they are all at my command, and have sworn to do whatever I bid them."

Some declared afterwards that as Wat said this, he laid his hand on the King's bridle. Others declared that he was seen to play with his own dagger. I think, myself, that he just spoke to the King like a rough, angry man, as he was, and did nothing more. At any rate he was expecting no attack, and preparing for no resistance, when Walworth the Mayor did the not very valiant deed of drawing a short sword and stabbing him in the throat. He dropped from his horse, and one of the King's people speedily finished him. So fell Wat Tyler. Fawners and flatterers made a mighty triumph of it, and set up a cry which will occasionally find an echo to this day. But Wat was a hard-working man, who had suffered much, and had been foully outraged; and it is probable that he was a man of a much higher nature and a much braver spirit than any of the parasites who exulted then, or have exulted since, over his defeat.

Seeing Wat down, his men immediately bent their bows to avenge his fall. If the young King had not had presence of mind at that dangerous moment, both he and the Mayor to boot, might have followed Tyler pretty fast. But the

King riding up to the crowd, cried out that Tyler was a traitor, and that he would be their leader. They were so taken by surprise, that they set up a great shouting, and followed the boy until he was met at Islington by a large body of soldiers.

The end of this rising was the then usual end. As soon as the King found himself safe, he unsaid all he had said, and undid all he had done; some fifteen hundred of the rioters were tried (mostly in Essex) with great rigour, and executed with great cruelty. Many of them were hanged on gibbets, and left there as a terror to the country people; and, because their miserable friends took some of the bodies down to bury, the King ordered the rest to be chained up—which was the beginning of the barbarous custom of hanging in chains. The King's falsehood in this business makes such a pitiful figure, that I think Wat Tyler appears in history as beyond comparison the truer and more respectable man of the two.

Richard was now sixteen years of age, and married Anne of Bohemia, an excellent princess, who was called "the good Queen Anne." She deserved a better husband; for the King had been fawned and flattered into a treacherous, wasteful, dissolute, bad young man.

There were two Popes at this time (as if one were not enough!), and their quarrels involved Europe in a great deal of trouble. Scotland was still troublesome too; and at home there was much jealousy and distrust, and plotting and counter-plotting, because the King feared the ambition of his relations, and particularly of his uncle, the Duke of Lancaster, and the duke had his party against the King, and the King had his party against the duke. Nor were these home troubles lessened when the duke went to Castile to urge his claim to the crown of that kingdom; for then the Duke of Gloucester, another of Richard's uncles, opposed him, and influenced the Parliament to demand the dismissal of the King's favourite ministers. The King said in reply, that he would not for such men dismiss the meanest servant in his kitchen. But, it had begun to signify little what a King said when a Parliament was determined; so Richard was at last obliged to give way, and to agree to another Government of the kingdom, under a commission of fourteen nobles, for a year. His uncle of Gloucester was at the head of this commission, and, in fact, appointed everybody composing it.

Having done all this, the King declared as soon as he saw an opportunity that he had never meant to do it, and that it was all illegal; and

he got the judges secretly to sign a declaration to that effect. The secret oozed out directly, and was carried to the Duke of Gloucester. The Duke of Gloucester, at the head of forty thousand men, met the King on his entering into London to enforce his authority; the King was helpless against him; his favourites and ministers were impeached and were mercilessly executed. Among them were two men whom the people regarded with very different feelings; one, Robert Tresilian, Chief Justice, who was hated for having made what was called "the bloody circuit" to try the rioters; the other, Sir Simon Burley, an honourable knight, who had been the dear friend of the Black Prince, and the governor and guardian of the King. For this gentleman's life the good Queen even begged of Gloucester on her knees; but Gloucester (with or without reason) feared and hated him, and replied, that if she valued her husband's crown, she had better beg no more. All this was done under what was called by some the wonderful—and by others, with better reason, the merciless—Parliament.

But Gloucester's power was not to last for ever. He held it for only a year longer; in which year the famous battle of Otterbourne, sung in the old ballad of Chevy Chase, was fought. When the year was out, the King, turning suddenly to Gloucester, in the midst of a great council said, "Uncle, how old am I?" "Your highness," returned the Duke, "is in your twenty-second year." "Am I so much?" said the King, "then I will manage my own affairs! I am much obliged to you, my good lords, for your past services, but I need them no more." He followed this up, by appointing a new Chancellor and a new Treasurer, and announced to the people that he had resumed the Government. He held it for eight years without opposition. Through all that time, he kept his determination to revenge himself some day upon his uncle Gloucester, in his own breast.

At last the good Queen died, and then the King, desiring to take a second wife, proposed to his council that he should marry Isabella, of France, the daughter of Charles the Sixth: who, the French courtiers said (as the English courtiers had said of Richard), was a marvel of beauty and wit, and quite a phenomenon—of seven years old. The council were divided about this marriage, but it took place. It secured peace between England and France for a quarter of a century; but it was strongly opposed to the prejudices of the English people. The Duke of Gloucester, who was anxious to take the occa-

sion of making himself popular, declaimed against it loudly, and this at length decided the King to execute the vengeance he had been nursing so long.

He went with a gay company to the Duke of Gloucester's house, Pleshey Castle, in Essex, where the Duke, suspecting nothing, came out into the court-yard to receive his royal visitor. While the King conversed in a friendly manner with the Duchess, the Duke was quietly seized, hurried away, shipped for Calais, and lodged in the castle there. His friends, the Earls of Arundel and Warwick, were taken in the same treacherous manner, and confined to their castles. A few days after, at Nottingham, they were impeached of high treason. The Earl of Arundel was condemned and beheaded, and the Earl of Warwick was banished. Then, a writ was sent by a messenger to the Governor of Calais, requiring him to send the Duke of Gloucester over to be tried. In three days he returned an answer that he could not do that, because the Duke of Gloucester had died in prison. The Duke was declared a traitor, his property was confiscated to the King, a real or pretended confession he had made in prison to one of the Justices of the Common Pleas was produced against him, and there was an end of the matter. How the unfortunate duke died, very few cared to know. Whether he really died naturally; whether he killed himself; whether, by the King's order, he was strangled, or smothered between two beds (as a serving-man of the Governor's named Hall, did afterwards declare), cannot be discovered. There is not much doubt that he was killed, somehow or other, by his nephew's orders. Among the most active nobles in these proceedings were the King's cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, whom the King had made Duke of Hereford to smooth down the old family quarrels, and some others: who had in the family-plotting times done just such acts themselves as they now condemned in the duke. They seem to have been a corrupt set of men; but such men were easily found about the court in such days.

The people murmured at all this, and were still very sore about the French marriage. The nobles saw how little the King cared for law, and how crafty he was, and began to be somewhat afraid of themselves. The King's life was a life of continued feasting and excess; his retinue, down to the meanest servants, were dressed in the most costly manner, and caroused at his tables; it is related, to the number of ten thousand persons every day. He himself, surrounded by a body of ten thousand archers, and

enriched by a duty on wool which the Commons had granted him for life, saw no danger of ever being otherwise than powerful and absolute, and was as fierce and haughty as a King could be.

He had two of his old enemies left, in the persons of the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk. Sparing these no more than the others, he tampered with the Duke of Hereford until he got him to declare before the Council that the Duke of Norfolk had lately held some treasonable talk with him, as he was riding near Brentford; and that he had told him, among other things, that he could not believe the King's oath—which nobody could, I should think. For this treachery he obtained a pardon, and the Duke of Norfolk was summoned to appear and defend himself. As he denied the charge and said his accuser was a liar and a traitor, both noblemen, according to the manner of those times, were held in custody, and the truth was ordered to be decided by wager of battle at Coventry. This wager of battle meant that whosoever won the combat was to be considered in the right; which nonsense meant in effect, that no strong man could ever be wrong. A great holiday was made; a great crowd assembled, with much parade and show; and the two combatants were about to rush at each other with their lances, when the King, sitting in a pavilion to see fair, threw down the truncheon he carried in his hand, and forbade the battle. The Duke of Hereford was to be banished for ten years, and the Duke of Norfolk was to be banished for life. So said the King. The Duke of Hereford went to France, and went no farther. The Duke of Norfolk made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and afterwards died at Venice of a broken heart.

Faster and fiercer, after this, the King went on in his career. The Duke of Lancaster, who was the father of the Duke of Hereford, died soon after the departure of his son; and, the King, although he had solemnly granted to that son leave to inherit his father's property, if it should come to him during his banishment, immediately seized it all, like a robber. The judges were so afraid of him, that they disgraced themselves by declaring this theft to be just and lawful. His avarice knew no bounds. He outlawed seventeen counties at once, on a frivolous pretence, merely to raise money by way of fines for misconduct. In short, he did as many dishonest things as he could; and cared so little for the discontent of his subjects—though even the spaniel favourites began to whisper to him that there was such a thing as discontent afloat—that he took that time, of all others, for leaving

England and making an expedition against the Irish.

He was scarcely gone, leaving the DUKE OF YORK Regent in his absence, when his cousin, Henry of Hereford, came over from France to claim the rights of which he had been so monstrously deprived. He was immediately joined by the two great Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland; and his uncle, the Regent, finding the King's cause unpopular, and the disinclination of the army to act against Henry, very strong, withdrew with the royal forces towards Bristol. Henry, at the head of an army, came from Yorkshire (where he had landed) to London and followed him. They joined their forces—how they brought that about, is not distinctly understood—and proceeded to Bristol Castle, whither three noblemen had taken the young Queen. The castle surrendering, they presently put those three noblemen to death. The Regent then remained there, and Henry went on to Chester.

All this time, the boisterous weather had prevented the King from receiving intelligence of what had occurred. At length it was conveyed to him in Ireland, and he sent over the EARL OF SALISBURY, who, landing at Conway, rallied the Welshmen, and waited for the King a whole fortnight; at the end of that time the Welshmen, who were perhaps not very warm for him in the beginning, quite cooled down and went home. When the King did land on the coast at last, he came with a pretty good power, but his men cared nothing for him, and quickly deserted. Supposing the Welshmen to be still at Conway, he disguised himself as a priest, and made for that place in company with his two brothers and some few of their adherents. But, there were no Welshmen left—only Salisbury and a hundred soldiers. In this distress, the King's two brothers, Exeter and Surrey, offered to go to Henry to learn what his intentions were. Surrey, who was true to Richard, was put into prison. Exeter, who was false, took the royal badge, which was a hart, off his shield, and assumed the rose, the badge of Henry. After this, it was pretty plain to the King what Henry's intentions were, without sending any more messengers to ask.

The fallen King, thus deserted—hemmed in on all sides, and pressed with hunger—rode here and rode there, and went to this castle, and went to that castle, endeavouring to obtain some provisions, but could find none. He rode wretchedly back to Conway, and there surrendered himself to the Earl of Northumberland, who came from Henry, in reality to take him prisoner, but in appearance to offer terms; and

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whose men were hidden not far off. By this earl he was conducted to the castle of Flint, where his cousin Henry met him, and dropped on his knee as if he were still respectful to his sovereign.

"Fair cousin of Lancaster," said the King, "you are very welcome" (very welcome, no doubt; but he would have been more so, in chains or without a head).

"My lord," replied Henry, "I am come a little before my time; but, with your good pleasure, I will show you the reason. Your people complain with some bitterness, that you have ruled them rigorously for two-and-twenty years. Now, if it please God, I will help you to govern them better in future."

"Fair cousin," replied the abject King, "since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth me mightily."

After this, the trumpets sounded, and the King was stuck on a wretched horse, and carried prisoner to Chester, where he was made to issue a proclamation, calling a Parliament. From Chester he was taken on towards London. At Lichfield he tried to escape by getting out of a window and letting himself down into a garden; it was all in vain, however, and he was carried on and shut up in the Tower, where no one pitied him, and where the whole people, whose patience he had quite tired out, reproached him without mercy. Before he got there, it is related, that his very dog left him and departed from his side to lick the hand of Henry.

The day before the Parliament met, a deputation went to this wrecked King, and told him that he had promised the Earl of Northumberland at Conway Castle to resign the crown. He said he was quite ready to do it, and signed a paper in which he renounced his authority and absolved his people from their allegiance to him. He had so little spirit left that he gave his royal ring to his triumphant cousin Henry with his own hand, and said, that if he could have had leave to appoint a successor, that same Henry was the man of all others whom he would have named. Next day, the Parliament assembled in Westminster Hall, where Henry sat at the side of the throne, which was empty and covered with a cloth of gold. The paper just signed by the King was read to the multitude amid shouts of joy, which were echoed through all the streets; when some of the noise had died away, the King was formally deposed. Then Henry arose, and, making the sign of the cross on his forehead and breast, challenged the realm of England as his right; the archbishops of Canterbury and York seated him on the throne.

The multitude shouted again, and the shouts

re-echoed throughout all the streets. No one remembered, now, that Richard the Second had ever been the most beautiful, the wisest, and the best of princes; and he now made living (to my thinking) a far more sorry spectacle in the Tower of London, than Wat Tyler had made, lying dead, among the hoofs of the royal horses in Smithfield.

The Poll-tax died with Wat. The Smiths to the King and Royal Family, could make no chains in which the King could hang the people's recollection of him; so the Poll-tax was never collected.

CHAPTER XX.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE FOURTH, CALLED
BOLINGBROKE.

DURING the last reign, the preaching of Wickliffe against the pride and cunning of the Pope and all his men, had made a great noise in England. Whether the new King wished to be in favour with the priests, or whether he hoped, by pretending to be very religious, to cheat Heaven itself into the belief that he was not an usurper, I don't know. Both suppositions are likely enough. It is certain that he began his reign by making a strong show against the followers of Wickliffe, who were called Lollards, or heretics—although his father, John of Gaunt, had been of that way of thinking, as he himself had been more than suspected of being. It is no less certain that he first established in England the detestable and atrocious custom, brought from abroad, of burning those people as a punishment for their opinions. It was the importation into England of one of the practices of what was called the Holy Inquisition: which was the most *unholy* and the most infamous tribunal that ever disgraced mankind, and made men more like demons than followers of Our Saviour.

No real right to the crown, as you know, was in this King. Edward Mortimer, the young Earl of March—who was only eight or nine years old, and who was descended from the Duke of Clarence, the elder brother of Henry's father—was, by succession, the real heir to the throne. However, the King got his son declared Prince of Wales; and, obtaining possession of the young Earl of March and his little brother, kept them in confinement (but not severely) in Windsor Castle. He then required

the Parliament to decide what was to be done with the deposed King, who was quiet enough, and who only said that he hoped his cousin Henry would be "a good lord" to him. The Parliament replied that they would recommend his being kept in some secret place where the people could not resort, and where his friends could not be admitted to see him. Henry accordingly passed this sentence upon him, and it now began to be pretty clear to the nation that Richard the Second would not live very long.

It was a noisy Parliament, as it was an unprincipled one, and the Lords quarrelled so violently among themselves as to which of them had been loyal and which disloyal, and which consistent and which inconsistent, that forty gauntlets are said to have been thrown upon the floor at one time as challenges to as many battles: the truth being that they were all false and base together, and had been, at one time with the old King, and at another time with the new one, and seldom true for any length of time to any one. They soon began to plot again. A conspiracy was formed to invite the King to a tournament at Oxford, and then to take him by surprise and kill him. This murderous enterprise, which was agreed upon at secret meetings in the house of the Abbot of Westminster, was betrayed by the Earl of Rutland—one of the conspirators. The King, instead of going to the tournament or staying at Windsor (where the conspirators suddenly went, on finding themselves discovered, with the hope of seizing him), retired to London, proclaimed them all traitors, and advanced upon them with a great force. They retired into the west of England, proclaiming Richard King; but, the people rose against them, and they were all slain. Their treason hastened the death of the deposed monarch. Whether he was killed by hired assassins, or whether he was starved to death, or whether he refused food on hearing of his brothers being killed (who were in that plot), is very doubtful. He met his death somehow; and his body was publicly shown at St. Paul's Cathedral with only the lower part of the face uncovered. I can scarcely doubt that he was killed by the King's orders.

The French wife of the miserable Richard was now only ten years old; and, when her father, Charles of France, heard of her misfortunes and of her lonely condition in England, he went mad: as he had several times done before, during the last five or six years. The French Dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon took

up the poor girl's cause, without caring much about it, but on the chance of getting something out of England. The people of Bordeaux, who had a sort of superstitious attachment to the memory of Richard, because he was born there, swore by the Lord that he had been the best man in all his kingdom—which was going rather far—and promised to do great things against the English. Nevertheless, when they came to consider that they, and the whole people of France, were ruined by their own nobles, and that the English rule was much the better of the two, they cooled down again; and the two dukes, although they were very great men, could do nothing without them. Then, began negotiations between France and England for the sending home to Paris of the poor little Queen with all her jewels and her fortune of two hundred thousand francs in gold. The King was quite willing to restore the young lady, and even the jewels; but he said he really could not part with the money. So, at last she was safely deposited at Paris without her fortune, and then the Duke of Burgundy (who was cousin to the French King) began to quarrel with the Duke of Orleans (who was brother to the French King) about the whole matter; and those two dukes made France even more wretched than ever.

As the idea of conquering Scotland was still popular at home, the King marched to the river Tyne and demanded homage of the King of that country. This being refused, he advanced to Edinburgh, but did little there; for, his army being in want of provisions, and the Scotch being very careful to hold him in check without giving battle, he was obliged to retire. It is to his immortal honour that in this sally he burnt no villages and slaughtered no people, but was particularly careful that his army should be merciful and harmless. It was a great example in those ruthless times.

A war among the border people of England and Scotland went on for twelve months, and then the Earl of Northumberland, the nobleman who had helped Henry to the crown, began to rebel against him—probably because nothing that Henry could do for him would satisfy his extravagant expectations. There was a certain Welsh gentleman, named OWEN GLENDOWER, who had been a student in one of the Inns of Court, and had afterwards been in the service of the late King, whose Welsh property was taken from him by a powerful lord related to the present King, who was his neighbour. Appealing for redress, and getting none, he took up arms, was made an outlaw, and declared

himself sovereign of Wales. He pretended to be a magician; and not only were the Welsh people stupid enough to believe him, but, even Henry believed him too; for, making three expeditions into Wales, and being three times driven back by the wildness of the country, the bad weather, and the skill of Glendower, he thought he was defeated by the Welshman's magic arts. However, he took Lord Grey and Sir Edmund Mortimer, prisoners, and allowed the relatives of Lord Grey to ransom him, but would not extend such favour to Sir Edmund Mortimer. Now, Henry Percy, called HOTSPUR, son of the Earl of Northumberland, who was married to Mortimer's sister, is supposed to have taken offence at this; and, therefore, in conjunction with his father and some others, to have joined Owen Glendower, and risen against Henry. It is by no means clear that this was the real cause of the conspiracy; but perhaps it was made the pretext. It was formed, and was very powerful; including SCROOP, Archbishop of York, and the EARL OF DOUGLAS, a powerful and brave Scottish nobleman. The King was prompt and active, and the two armies met at Shrewsbury.

There were about fourteen thousand men in each. The old Earl of Northumberland being sick, the rebel forces were led by his son. The King wore plain armour to deceive the enemy; and four noblemen, with the same object, wore the royal arms. The rebel charge was so furious, that every one of those gentlemen was killed, the royal standard was beaten down, and the young Prince of Wales was severely wounded in the face. But he was one of the bravest and best soldiers that ever lived, and he fought so well, and the King's troops were so encouraged by his bold example, that they rallied immediately, and cut the enemy's forces all to pieces. Hotspur was killed by an arrow in the brain, and the rout was so complete that the whole rebellion was struck down by this one blow. The Earl of Northumberland surrendered himself soon after hearing of the death of his son, and received a pardon for all his offences.

There were some lingerings of rebellion yet: Owen Glendower being retired to Wales, and a preposterous story being spread among the ignorant people that King Richard was still alive. How they could have believed such nonsense it is difficult to imagine; but they certainly did suppose that the Court fool of the late King, who was something like him, was he, himself; so that it seemed as if, after giving so much trouble to the country in his life, he was still to trouble it after his death. This was not

the worst. The young Earl of March and his brother were stolen out of Windsor Castle. Being retaken, and being found to have been spirited away by one Lady Spencer, she accused her own brother, that Earl of Rutland who was in the former conspiracy and was now Duke of York, of being in the plot. For this he was ruined in fortune, though not put to death; and then another plot arose among the old Earl of Northumberland, some other lords, and that same Scroop, Archbishop of York, who was with the rebels before. These conspirators caused a writing to be posted on the church doors, accusing the King of a variety of crimes; but, the King being eager and vigilant to oppose them, they were all taken, and the Archbishop was executed. This was the first time that a great churchman had been slain by the law in England; but the King was resolved that it should be done, and done it was.

The next most remarkable event of this time was the seizure, by Henry, of the heir to the Scottish throne—James, a boy of nine years old. He had been put aboard-ship by his father, the Scottish King Robert, to save him from the designs of his uncle, when, on his way to France, he was accidentally taken by some English cruisers. He remained a prisoner in England for nineteen years, and became in his prison a student and a famous poet.

With the exception of occasional troubles with the Welsh and with the French, the rest of King Henry's reign was quiet enough. But, the King was far from happy, and probably was troubled in his conscience by knowing that he had usurped the crown, and had occasioned the death of his miserable cousin. The Prince of Wales, though brave and generous, is said to have been wild and dissipated, and even to have drawn his sword on GASCOIGNE, the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, because he was firm in dealing impartially with one of his dissolute companions. Upon this the Chief Justice is said to have ordered him immediately to prison; the Prince of Wales is said to have submitted with a good grace; and the King is said to have exclaimed, "Happy is the monarch who has so just a judge, and a son so willing to obey the laws." This is all very doubtful, and so is another story (of which Shakespeare has made beautiful use), that the Prince once took the crown out of his father's chamber as he was sleeping, and tried it on his own head.

The King's health sank more and more, and he became subject to violent eruptions on the face and to bad epileptic fits, and his spirits sank every day. At last, as he was praying before

the shrine of St. Edward at Westminster Abbey, he was seized with a terrible fit, and was carried into the Abbot's chamber, where he presently died. It had been foretold that he would die at Jerusalem, which certainly is not, and never was, Westminster. But, as the Abbot's room had long been called the Jerusalem chamber, people said it was all the same thing, and were quite satisfied with the prediction.

The King died on the 20th of March, 1413, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign. He was buried in Canterbury Cathedral. He had been twice married, and had, by his first wife, a family of four sons and two daughters. Considering his duplicity before he came to the throne, his unjust seizure of it, and, above all, his making that monstrous law for the burning of what the priests called heretics, he was a reasonably good king, as kings went.

CHAPTER XXI.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE FIFTH.

FIRST PART.



THE Prince of Wales began his reign like a generous and honest man. He set the young Earl of March free; he restored their estates and their honours to the Percy family, who had lost them by their rebellion against his father; he ordered the imbecile and unfortunate Richard to be honourably buried among the Kings of England; and he dismissed all his wild companions, with assurances that they should not want, if they would resolve to be steady, faithful, and true.

It is much easier to burn men than to burn their opinions; and those of the Lollards were spreading every day. The Lollards were represented by the priests—probably falsely for the most part—to entertain treasonable designs against the new King; and Henry, suffering himself to be worked upon by these representations, sacrificed his friend Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, to them, after trying in vain to convert him by arguments. He was declared guilty, as the head of the sect, and sentenced to the flames; but he escaped from the Tower before the day of execution (postponed for fifty days by the King himself), and summoned the Lollards to meet him near London on a certain day. So the priests told the King, at least. I doubt whether there was any con-

spiracy beyond such as was got up by their agents. On the day appointed, instead of five-and-twenty thousand men, under the command of Sir John Oldcastle, in the meadows of St. Giles, the King found only eighty men, and no Sir John at all. There was, in another place, an addle-headed brewer, who had gold trappings to his horses, and a pair of gilt spurs in his breast—expecting to be made a knight next day by Sir John, and so to gain the right to wear them—but there was no Sir John, nor did anybody give information respecting him, though the King offered great rewards for such intelligence. Thirty of these unfortunate Lollards were hanged and drawn immediately, and were then burnt, gallows and all; and the various prisons in and around London were crammed full of others. Some of these unfortunate men made various confessions of treasonable designs; but, such confessions were easily got, under torture and the fear of fire, and are very little to be trusted. To finish the sad story of Sir John Oldcastle at once, I may mention that he escaped into Wales, and remained there safely, for four years. When discovered by Lord Powis, it is very doubtful if he would have been taken alive—so great was the old soldier's bravery—if a miserable old woman had not come behind him and broken his legs with a stool. He was carried to London in a horse-litter, was fastened by an iron chain to a gibbet, and so roasted to death.

To make the state of France as plain as I can in a few words, I should tell you that the Duke of Orleans, and the Duke of Burgundy, commonly called "John without fear," had had a grand reconciliation of their quarrel in the last reign, and had appeared to be quite in a heavenly state of mind. Immediately after which, on a Sunday, in the public streets of Paris, the Duke of Orleans was murdered by a party of twenty men, set on by the Duke of Burgundy—according to his own deliberate confession. The widow of King Richard had been married in France to the eldest son of the Duke of Orleans. The poor mad King was quite powerless to help her, and the Duke of Burgundy became the real master of France. Isabella dying, her husband (Duke of Orleans since the death of his father) married the daughter of the Count of Armagnac, who, being a much abler man than his young son-in-law, headed his party; thence called after him Armagnacs. Thus, France was now in this terrible condition, that it had in it the party of the King's son, the Dauphin Louis; the party of the Duke of Burgundy, who was the father of the Dauphin's ill-used wife; and the party of the

Armagnacs; all hating each other; all fighting together; all composed of the most depraved nobles that the earth has ever known; and all tearing unhappy France to pieces.

The late King had watched these dissensions from England, sensible (like the French people) that no enemy of France could injure her more than her own nobility. The present King now advanced a claim to the French throne. His demand being, of course, refused, he reduced his proposal to a certain large amount of French territory, and to demanding the French princess, Catherine, in marriage, with a fortune of two millions of golden crowns. He was offered less territory and fewer crowns, and no princess; but he called his ambassadors home and prepared for war. Then, he proposed to take the princess with one million of crowns. The French Court replied that he should have the princess with two hundred thousand crowns less; he said this would not do (he had never seen the princess in his life), and assembled his army at Southampton. There was a short plot at home just at that time, for deposing him, and making the Earl of March king; but the conspirators were all speedily condemned and executed, and the King embarked for France.

It is dreadful to observe how long a bad example will be followed; but, it is encouraging to know that a good example is never thrown away. The King's first act on disembarking at the mouth of the river Seine, three miles from Harfleur, was to imitate his father, and to proclaim his solemn orders that the lives and property of the peaceable inhabitants should be respected on pain of death. It is agreed by French writers, to his lasting renown, that even while his soldiers were suffering the greatest distress from want of food, these commands were rigidly obeyed.

With an army in all of thirty thousand men, he besieged the town of Harfleur both by sea and land for five weeks; at the end of which time the town surrendered, and the inhabitants were allowed to depart with only fivepence each, and a part of their clothes. All the rest of their possessions was divided amongst the English army. But, that army suffered so much, in spite of its successes, from disease and privation, that it was already reduced one half. Still, the King was determined not to retire until he had struck a greater blow. Therefore, against the advice of all his counsellors, he moved on with his little force towards Calais. When he came up to the river Somme he was unable to cross, in consequence of the ford being fortified; and, as the English moved up

the left bank of the river looking for a crossing, the French, who had broken all the bridges, moved up the right bank, watching them, and waiting to attack them when they should try to pass it. At last the English found a crossing and got safely over. The French held a council of war at Rouen, resolved to give the English battle, and sent heralds to King Henry to know by which road he was going. "By the road that will take me straight to Calais!" said the King, and sent them away with a present of a hundred crowns.

The English moved on, until they beheld the French, and then the King gave orders to form in line of battle. The French not coming on, the army broke up after remaining in battle array till night, and got good rest and refreshment at a neighbouring village. The French were now all lying in another village, through which they knew the English must pass. They were resolved that the English should begin the battle. The English had no means of retreat, if their King had any such intention; and so the two armies passed the night, close together.

To understand these armies well, you must bear in mind that the immense French army had, among its notable persons, almost the whole of that wicked nobility, whose debauchery had made France a desert; and so besotted were they by pride, and by contempt for the common people, that they had scarcely any bowmen (if indeed they had any at all) in their whole enormous number: which, compared with the English army, was at least as six to one. For these proud fools had said that the bow was not a fit weapon for knightly hands, and that France must be defended by gentlemen only. We shall see, presently, what hand the gentlemen made of it.

Now, on the English side, among the little force, there was a good proportion of men who were not gentlemen by any means, but who were good stout archers for all that. Among them, in the morning—having slept little at night, while the French were carousing and making sure of victory—the King rode, on a grey horse; wearing on his head a helmet of shining steel, surmounted by a crown of gold, sparkling with precious stones; and bearing over his armour, embroidered together, the arms of England and the arms of France. The archers looked at the shining helmet and the crown of gold and the sparkling jewels, and admired them all; but, what they admired most was the King's cheerful face, and his bright blue eye, as he told them that, for himself, he had made up his mind to conquer there or to die there, and

that England should never have a ransom to pay for *him*. There was one brave knight who chanced to say that he wished some of the many gallant gentlemen and good soldiers, who were then idle at home in England, were there to increase their numbers. But the King told him that, for his part, he did not wish for one more man. "The fewer we have," said he, "the greater will be the honour we shall win!" His men, being now all in good heart, were refreshed with bread and wine, and heard prayers, and waited quietly for the French. The King waited for the French, because they were drawn up thirty deep (the little English force was only three deep), on very difficult and heavy ground; and he knew that when they moved, there must be confusion among them.

As they did not move, he sent off two parties:—one to lie concealed in a wood on the left of the French: the other, to set fire to some houses behind the French after the battle should be begun. This was scarcely done, when three of the proud French gentlemen, who were to defend their country without any help from the base peasants, came riding out, calling upon the English to surrender. The King warned those gentlemen himself to retire with all speed if they cared for their lives, and ordered the English banners to advance. Upon that, Sir Thomas Erpingham, a great English general, who commanded the archers, threw his truncheon into the air, joyfully; and all the English men, kneeling down upon the ground and biting it as if they took possession of the country, rose up with a great shout and fell upon the French.

Every archer was furnished with a great stake tipped with iron; and his orders were, to thrust this stake into the ground, to discharge his arrow, and then to fall back, when the French horsemen came on. As the haughty French gentlemen, who were to break the English archers and utterly destroy them with their knightly lances, came riding up, they were received with such a blinding storm of arrows that they broke and turned. Horses and men rolled over one another, and the confusion was terrific. Those who rallied and charged the archers got among the stakes on slippery and boggy ground, and were so bewildered that the English archers—who wore no armour, and even took off their leathern coats to be more active—cut them to pieces, root and branch. Only three French horsemen got within the stakes, and those were instantly despatched. All this time the dense French army, being in armour, were sinking knee-deep into the mire; while the light English

archers, half-naked, were as fresh and active as if they were fighting on a marble floor.

But now, the second division of the French coming to the relief of the first, closed up in a firm mass; the English, headed by the King, attacked them; and the deadliest part of the battle began. The King's brother, the Duke of Clarence, was struck down, and numbers of the French surrounded him; but, King Henry, standing over the body, fought like a lion until they were beaten off.

Presently, came up a band of eighteen French knights, bearing the banner of a certain French lord, who had sworn to kill or take the English King. One of them struck him such a blow with a battle-axe that he reeled and fell upon his knees; but, his faithful men, immediately closing round him, killed every one of those eighteen knights, and so that French lord never kept his oath.

The French Duke of Alençon, seeing this, made a desperate charge, and cut his way close up to the Royal Standard of England. He beat down the Duke of York, who was standing near it; and when the King came to his rescue, struck off a piece of the crown he wore. But, he never struck another blow in this world; for, even as he was in the act of saying who he was, and that he surrendered to the King; and even as the King stretched out his hand to give him a safe and honourable acceptance of the offer; he fell dead, pierced by innumerable wounds.

The death of this nobleman decided the battle. The third division of the French army, which had never struck a blow yet, and which was, in itself, more than double the whole English power, broke and fled. At this time of the fight, the English, who as yet had made no prisoners, began to take them in immense numbers, and were still occupied in doing so, or in killing those who would not surrender, when a great noise arose in the rear of the French—their flying banners were seen to stop—and King Henry, supposing a great reinforcement to have arrived, gave orders that all the prisoners should be put to death. As soon, however, as it was found that the noise was only occasioned by a body of plundering peasants, the terrible massacre was stopped.

Then King Henry called to him the French herald, and asked him to whom the victory belonged.

The herald replied, "To the King of England."

"We have not made this havoc and slaughter," said the King. "It is the wrath of Heaven

on the sins of France. What is the name of that castle yonder?"

The herald answered him, "My lord, it is the castle of Azincourt."

Said the King, "From henceforth this battle shall be known to posterity, by the name of the battle of Azincourt."

Our English historians have made it Agincourt; but, under that name, it will ever be famous in English annals.

The loss upon the French side was enormous. Three Dukes were killed, two more were taken prisoners, seven Counts were killed, three more were taken prisoners, and ten thousand knights and gentlemen were slain upon the field. The English loss amounted to sixteen hundred men, among whom were the Duke of York and the Earl of Suffolk.

War is a dreadful thing; and it is appalling to know how the English were obliged, next morning, to kill those prisoners mortally wounded, who yet writhed in agony upon the ground; how the dead upon the French side were stripped by their own countrymen and countrywomen, and afterwards buried in great pits; how the dead upon the English side were piled up in a great barn, and how their bodies and the barn were all burned together. It is in such things, and in many more much too horrible to relate, that the real desolation and wickedness of war consist. Nothing can make war otherwise than horrible. But the dark side of it was little thought of and soon forgotten; and it cast no shade of trouble on the English people, except on those who had lost friends or relations in the fight. They welcomed their King home with shouts of rejoicing, and plunged into the water to bear him ashore on their shoulders, and flocked out in crowds to welcome him in every town through which he passed, and hung rich carpets and tapestries out of the windows, and strewed the streets with flowers, and made the fountains run with wine, as the great field of Agincourt had run with blood.

SECOND PART.

THAT proud and wicked French nobility who dragged their country to destruction, and who were every day and every year regarded with deeper hatred and detestation in the hearts of the French people, learnt nothing, even from the defeat of Agincourt. So far from uniting against the common enemy, they became, among themselves, more violent, more bloody, and more false—if that were possible—than they had been before. The Count of Armagnac persuaded

the French king to plunder of her treasures Queen Isabella of Bavaria, and to make her a prisoner. She, who had hitherto been the bitter enemy of the Duke of Burgundy, proposed to join him, in revenge. He carried her off to Troyes, where she proclaimed herself Regent of France, and made him her lieutenant. The Armagnac party were at that time possessed of Paris; but, one of the gates of the city being secretly opened on a certain night to a party of the duke's men, they got into Paris, threw into the prisons all the Armagnacs upon whom they could lay their hands, and, a few nights afterwards, with the aid of a furious mob of sixty thousand people, broke the prisons open, and killed them all. The former Dauphin was now dead, and the King's third son bore the title. Him, in the height of this murderous scene, a French knight hurried out of bed, wrapped in a sheet, and bore away to Poitiers. So, when the revengeful Isabella and the Duke of Burgundy entered Paris in triumph after the slaughter of their enemies, the Dauphin was proclaimed at Poitiers as the real Regent.

King Henry had not been idle since his victory of Agincourt, but had repulsed a brave attempt of the French to recover Harfleur; had gradually conquered a great part of Normandy; and, at this crisis of affairs, took the important town of Rouen, after a siege of half a year. This great loss so alarmed the French, that the Duke of Burgundy proposed that a meeting to treat of peace should be held between the French and the English kings in a plain by the river Seine. On the appointed day, King Henry appeared there, with his two brothers, Clarence and Gloucester, and a thousand men. The unfortunate French King, being more mad than usual that day, could not come; but the Queen came, and with her the Princess Catherine: who was a very lovely creature, and who made a real impression on King Henry, now that he saw her for the first time. This was the most important circumstance that arose out of the meeting.

As if it were impossible for a French nobleman of that time to be true to his word of honour in anything, Henry discovered that the Duke of Burgundy was, at that very moment, in secret treaty with the Dauphin; and he therefore abandoned the negotiation.

The Duke of Burgundy and the Dauphin, each of whom with the best reason distrusted the other as a noble ruffian surrounded by a party of noble ruffians, were rather at a loss how to proceed after this; but, at length they agreed to meet, on a bridge over the river Yonne, where it was arranged that there should be two

strong gates put up, with an empty space between them; and that the Duke of Burgundy should come into that space by one gate, with ten men only; and that the Dauphin should come into that space by the other gate, also with ten men, and no more.

So far the Dauphin kept his word, but no farther. When the Duke of Burgundy was on his knee before him in the act of speaking, one of the Dauphin's noble ruffians cut the said duke down with a small axe, and others speedily finished him.

It was in vain for the Dauphin to pretend that this base murder was not done with his consent; it was too bad, even for France, and caused a general horror. The Duke's heir hastened to make a treaty with King Henry, and the French Queen engaged that her husband should consent to it, whatever it was. Henry made peace, on condition of receiving the Princess Catherine in marriage, and being made Regent of France during the rest of the King's lifetime, and succeeding to the French crown at his death. He was soon married to the beautiful Princess, and took her proudly home to England, where she was crowned with great honour and glory.

This peace was called the Perpetual Peace; we shall soon see how long it lasted. It gave great satisfaction to the French people, although they were so poor and miserable, that, at the time of the celebration of the Royal marriage, numbers of them were dying with starvation, on the dunghills in the streets of Paris. There was some resistance on the part of the Dauphin in some few parts of France, but King Henry beat it all down.

And now, with his great possessions in France secured, and his beautiful wife to cheer him, and a son born to give him greater happiness, all appeared bright before him. But, in the fulness of his triumph and the height of his power, Death came upon him, and his day was done. When he fell ill at Vincennes, and found that he could not recover, he was very calm and quiet, and spoke serenely to those who wept around his bed. His wife and child, he said, he left to the loving care of his brother the Duke of Bedford, and his other faithful nobles. He gave them his advice that England should establish a friendship with the new Duke of Burgundy, and offer him the regency of France; that it should not set free the royal princes who had been taken at Agincourt; and that, whatever quarrel might arise with France, England should never make peace without holding Normandy. Then, he laid down his head, and

asked the attendant priests to chant the penitential psalms. Amid which solemn sounds, on the thirty-first of August, one thousand four hundred and twenty-two, in only the thirty-fourth year of his age and the tenth of his reign, King Henry the Fifth passed away.

Slowly and mournfully they carried his embalmed body in a procession of great state to Paris, and thence to Rouen where his Queen was: from whom the sad intelligence of his death was concealed until he had been dead some days. Thence, lying on a bed of crimson and gold, with a golden crown upon the head, and a golden ball and sceptre lying in the nerveless hands, they carried it to Calais, with such a great retinue as seemed to dye the road black. The King of Scotland acted as chief mourner, all the Royal Household followed, the knights wore black armour and black plumes of feathers, crowds of men bore torches, making the night as light as day; and the widowed Princess followed last of all. At Calais there was a fleet of ships to bring the funeral host to Dover. And so, by way of London Bridge, where the service for the dead was chanted as it passed along, they brought the body to Westminster Abbey, and there buried it with great respect.

CHAPTER XXII.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE SIXTH.

PART THE FIRST.

IT had been the wish of the late King, that while his infant son KING HENRY THE SIXTH, at this time only nine months old, was under age, the Duke of Gloucester should be appointed Regent. The English Parliament, however, preferred to appoint a Council of Regency, with the Duke of Bedford at its head: to be represented, in his absence only, by the Duke of Gloucester. The Parliament would seem to have been wise in this, for Gloucester soon showed himself to be ambitious and troublesome, and, in the gratification of his own personal schemes, gave dangerous offence to the Duke of Burgundy, which was with difficulty adjusted.

As that duke declined the Regency of France, it was bestowed by the poor French King upon the Duke of Bedford. But, the French King dying within two months, the Dauphin instantly asserted his claim to the French throne, and was

actually crowned under the title of CHARLES THE SEVENTH. The Duke of Bedford, to be a match for him, entered into a friendly league with the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and gave them his two sisters in marriage. War with France was immediately renewed, and the Perpetual Peace came to an untimely end.

In the first campaign, the English, aided by this alliance, were speedily successful. As Scotland, however, had sent the French five thousand men, and might send more, or attack the North of England while England was busy with France, it was considered that it would be a good thing to offer the Scottish King, James, who had been so long imprisoned, his liberty, on his paying forty thousand pounds for his board and lodging during nineteen years, and engaging to forbid his subjects from serving under the flag of France. It is pleasant to know, not only that the amiable captive at last regained his freedom upon these terms, but, that he married a noble English lady, with whom he had been long in love, and became an excellent King. I am afraid we have met with some Kings in this history, and shall meet with some more, who would have been very much the better, and would have left the world much happier, if they had been imprisoned nineteen years too.

In the second campaign, the English gained a considerable victory at Verneuil, in a battle which was chiefly remarkable, otherwise, for their resorting to the odd expedient of tying their baggage-horses together by the heads and tails, and jumbling them up with the baggage, so as to convert them into a sort of live fortification—which was found useful to the troops, but which I should think was not agreeable to the horses. For three years afterwards very little was done, owing to both sides being too poor for war, which is a very expensive entertainment; but, a council was then held in Paris, in which it was decided to lay siege to the town of Orleans, which was a place of great importance to the Dauphin's cause. An English army of ten thousand men was despatched on this service, under the command of the Earl of Salisbury, a general of fame. He being unfortunately killed early in the siege, the Earl of Suffolk took his place; under whom (reinforced by SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, who brought up four hundred waggons laden with salt herrings and other provisions for the troops, and, beating off the French who tried to intercept him, came victorious out of a hot skirmish, which was afterwards called in jest the Battle of the Herrings), the town of Orleans was so completely hemmed in, that the besieged proposed to yield it up to their countrymen the

Duke of Burgundy. The English general, however, replied that his English men had won it, so far, by their blood and valour, and that his English men must have it. There seemed to be no hope for the town, or for the Dauphin, who was so dismayed that he even thought of flying to Scotland or to Spain—when a peasant girl rose up and changed the whole state of affairs.

The story of this peasant girl I have now to tell.

PART THE SECOND.

THE STORY OF JOAN OF ARC.

IN a remote village among some wild hills in the province of Lorraine, there lived a countryman whose name was JACQUES D'ARC. He had a daughter, JOAN OF ARC, who was at this time in her twentieth year. She had been a solitary girl from her childhood; she had often tended sheep and cattle for whole days where no human figure was seen or human voice heard; and she had often knelt, for hours together, in the gloomy empty little village chapel, looking up at the altar and at the dim lamp burning before it, until she fancied that she saw shadowy figures standing there, and even that she heard them speak to her. The people in that part of France were very ignorant and superstitious, and they had many ghostly tales to tell about what they had dreamed, and what they saw among the lonely hills when the clouds and the mists were resting on them. So, they easily believed that Joan saw strange sights, and they whispered among themselves that angels and spirits talked to her.

At last, Joan told her father that she had one day been surprised by a great unearthly light, and had afterwards heard a solemn voice, which said it was Saint Michael's voice, telling her that she was to go and help the Dauphin. Soon after this (she said), Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret had appeared to her with sparkling crowns upon their heads, and had encouraged her to be virtuous and resolute. These visions had returned sometimes; but the Voices very often; and the voices always said, "Joan, thou art appointed by Heaven to go and help the Dauphin!" She almost always heard them while the chapel bells were ringing.

There is no doubt, now, that Joan believed she saw and heard these things. It is very well known that such delusions are a disease which is not by any means uncommon. It is probable enough that there were figures of Saint Michael,

and Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret, in the little chapel (where they would be very likely to have shining crowns upon their heads), and that they first gave Joan the idea of those three personages. She had long been a moping, fanciful girl, and, though she was a very good girl, I dare say she was a little vain, and wishful for notoriety.

Her father, something wiser than his neighbours, said, "I tell thee, Joan, it is thy fancy. Thou hadst better have a kind husband to take care of thee, girl, and work to employ thy mind!" But Joan told him in reply, that she had taken a vow never to have a husband, and that she must go as Heaven directed her, to help the Dauphin.

It happened, unfortunately for her father's persuasions, and most unfortunately for the poor girl, too, that a party of the Dauphin's enemies found their way into the village while Joan's disorder was at this point, and burnt the chapel, and drove out the inhabitants. The cruelties she saw committed, touched Joan's heart and made her worse. She said that the voices and the figures were now continually with her; that they told her she was the girl who, according to an old prophecy, was to deliver France; and she must go and help the Dauphin, and must remain with him until he should be crowned at Rheims: and that she must travel a long way to a certain lord named BAUDRICOURT, who could and would, bring her into the Dauphin's presence.

As her father still said, "I tell thee, Joan, it is thy fancy," she set off to find out this lord, accompanied by an uncle, a poor village wheelwright and cart-maker, who believed in the reality of her visions. They travelled a long way and went on and on, over a rough country, full of the Duke of Burgundy's men, and of all kinds of robbers and marauders, until they came to where this lord was.

When his servants told him that there was a poor peasant girl named Joan of Arc, accompanied by nobody but an old village wheelwright and cart-maker, who wished to see him because she was commanded to help the Dauphin and save France, Baudricourt burst out a-laughing, and bade them send the girl away. But, he soon heard so much about her lingering in the town, and praying in the churches, and seeing visions, and doing harm to no one, that he sent for her, and questioned her. As she said the same things after she had been well sprinkled with holy water as she had said before the sprinkling, Baudricourt began to think there might be something in it. At all events, he

thought it worth while to send her on to the town of Chinon, where the Dauphin was. So, he bought her a horse, and a sword, and gave her two squires to conduct her. As the Voices had told Joan that she was to wear a man's dress, now, she put one on, and girded her sword to her side, and bound spurs to her heels, and mounted her horse and rode away with her two squires. As to her uncle the wheelwright, he stood staring at his niece in wonder until she was out of sight—as well he might—and then went home again. The best place, too.

Joan and her two squires rode on and on, until they came to Chinon, where she was, after some doubt, admitted into the Dauphin's presence. Picking him out immediately from all his court, she told him that she came commanded by Heaven to subdue his enemies and conduct him to his coronation at Rheims. She also told him (or he pretended so afterwards, to make the greater impression upon his soldiers) a number of his secrets known only to himself, and, furthermore, she said there was an old, old sword in the cathedral of Saint Catherine at Fierbois, marked with five old crosses on the blade, which Saint Catherine had ordered her to wear.

Now, nobody knew anything about this old, old sword, but when the cathedral came to be examined—which was immediately done—there, sure enough, the sword was found! The Dauphin then required a number of grave priests and bishops to give him their opinion whether the girl derived her power from good spirits or from evil spirits, which they held prodigiously long debates about, in the course of which several learned men fell fast asleep and snored loudly. At last, when one gruff old gentleman had said to Joan, "What language do your Voices speak?" and when Joan had replied to the gruff old gentleman, "A pleasanter language than yours," they agreed that it was all correct, and that Joan of Arc was inspired from Heaven. This wonderful circumstance put new heart into the Dauphin's soldiers when they heard of it, and dispirited the English army, who took Joan for a witch.

So Joan mounted horse again, and again rode on and on, until she came to Orleans. But she rode now, as never peasant girl had ridden yet. She rode upon a white war-horse, in a suit of glittering armour; with the old, old sword from the cathedral, newly burnished, in her belt; with a white flag carried before her, upon which were a picture of God, and the words *JESUS MARIA*. In this splendid state, at the head of a great body of troops escorting provisions of all kinds

for the starving inhabitants of Orleans, she appeared before that beleaguered city.

When the people on the walls beheld her, they cried out "The Maid is come! The Maid of the Prophecy is come to deliver us!" And this, and the sight of the Maid fighting at the head of their men, made the French so bold, and made the English so fearful, that the English line of forts was soon broken, the troops and provisions were got into the town, and Orleans was saved.

Joan, henceforth called *THE MAID OF ORLEANS*, remained within the walls for a few days, and caused letters to be thrown over, ordering Lord Suffolk and his Englishmen to depart from before the town according to the will of Heaven. As the English general very positively declined to believe that Joan knew anything about the will of Heaven (which did not mend the matter with his soldiers, for they stupidly said if she were not inspired she was a witch, and it was of no use to fight against a witch), she mounted her white war-horse again, and ordered her white banner to advance.

The besiegers held the bridge, and some strong towers upon the bridge; and here the Maid of Orleans attacked them. The fight was fourteen hours long. She planted a scaling ladder with her own hands, and mounted a tower wall, but was struck by an English arrow in the neck, and fell into the trench. She was carried away and the arrow was taken out, during which operation she screamed and cried with the pain, as any other girl might have done; but presently she said that the Voices were speaking to her and soothing her to rest. After a while, she got up, and was again foremost in the fight. When the English who had seen her fall and supposed her dead, saw this, they were troubled with the strangest fears, and some of them cried out that they beheld Saint Michael on a white horse (probably Joan herself) fighting for the French. They lost the bridge, and lost the towers, and next day set their chain of forts on fire, and left the place.

But as Lord Suffolk himself retired no farther than the town of Jargeau, which was only a few miles off, the Maid of Orleans besieged him there, and he was taken prisoner. As the white banner scaled the wall, she was struck upon the head with a stone, and was again tumbled down into the ditch; but, she only cried all the more, as she lay there, "On, on, my countrymen! And fear nothing, for the Lord hath delivered them into our hands!" After this new success of the Maid's, several other fortresses and places which had previously held out against the Dau-

phin were delivered up without a battle; and at Patay she defeated the remainder of the English army, and set up her victorious white banner on a field where twelve hundred Englishmen lay dead.

She now urged the Dauphin (who always kept out of the way when there was any fighting) to proceed to Rheims, as the first part of her mission was accomplished; and to complete the whole by being crowned there. The Dauphin was in no particular hurry to do this, as Rheims was a long way off, and the English and the Duke of Burgundy were still strong in the country through which the road lay. However, they set forth, with ten thousand men, and again the Maid of Orleans rode on and on, upon her white war-horse, and in her shining armour. Whenever they came to a town which yielded readily, the soldiers believed in her; but, whenever they came to a town which gave them any trouble, they began to murmur that she was an impostor. The latter was particularly the case at Troyes, which finally yielded, through the persuasion of one Richard, a friar of the place. Friar Richard was in the old doubt about the Maid of Orleans, until he had sprinkled her well with holy water, and had also well sprinkled the threshold of the gate by which she came into the city. Finding that it made no change in her or the gate, he said, as the other grave old gentlemen had said, that it was all right, and became her great ally.

So, at last, and by dint of riding on and on, the Maid of Orleans, and the Dauphin, and the ten thousand sometimes believing and sometimes unbelieving men, came to Rheims. And in the great cathedral of Rheims, the Dauphin actually was crowned Charles the Seventh in a great assembly of the people. Then, the Maid, who with her white banner stood beside the King in that hour of his triumph, kneeled down upon the pavement at his feet, and said, with tears, that what she had been inspired to do, was done, and that the only recompense she asked for, was, that she should now have leave to go back to her distant home, and her sturdily incredulous father, and her first simple escort the village wheelwright and cart-maker. But the King said "No!" and made her and her family as noble as a King could, and settled upon her the income of a Count.

Ah! happy had it been for the Maid of Orleans, if she had resumed her rustic dress that day, and had gone home to the little chapel and the wild hills, and had forgotten all these things, and had been a good man's wife, and had heard no stranger voices than the voices of little children!

It was not to be, and she continued helping the King (she did a world for him, in alliance with Friar Richard), and trying to improve the lives of the coarse soldiers, and leading a religious, an unselfish, and a modest life, herself, beyond any doubt. Still, many times she prayed the King to let her go home; and once she even took off her bright armour and hung it up in a church, meaning never to wear it more. But, the King always won her back again—while she was of any use to him—and so she went on and on and on, to her doom.

When the Duke of Bedford, who was a very able man, began to be active for England, and, by bringing the war back into France and by holding the Duke of Burgundy to his faith, to distress and disturb Charles very much, Charles sometimes asked the Maid of Orleans what the Voices said about it? But, the Voices had become (very like ordinary voices in perplexed times) contradictory and confused, so that now they said one thing, and now said another, and the Maid lost credit every day. Charles marched on Paris, which was opposed to him, and attacked the suburb of Saint Honoré. In this fight, being again struck down into the ditch, she was abandoned by the whole army. She lay unaided among a heap of dead, and crawled out how she could. Then, some of her believers went over to an opposition Maid, Catherine of La Rochelle, who said she was inspired to tell where there were treasures of buried money—though she never did—and then Jean accidentally broke the old, old sword, and others said that her power was broken with it. Finally, at the siege of Compiègne, held by the Duke of Burgundy, where she did valiant service, she was basely left alone in a retreat, though facing about and fighting to the last; and an archer pulled her off her horse.

O the uproar that was made, and the thanksgivings that were sung, about the capture of this one poor country-girl! O the way in which she was demanded to be tried for sorcery and heresy, and anything else you like, by the Inquisitor-General of France, and by this great man, and by that great man, until it is wearisome to think of! She was bought at last by the Bishop of Beauvais for ten thousand francs, and was shut up in her narrow prison: plain Joan of Arc again, and Maid of Orleans no more.

I should never have done if I were to tell you how they had Joan out to examine her, and cross-examine her, and re-examine her, and worry her into saying anything and everything; and how all sorts of scholars and doctors be-

stowed their utmost tediousness upon her. Sixteen times she was brought out and shut up again, and worried, and entrapped, and argued with, until she was heart-sick of the dreary business. On the last occasion of this kind she was brought into a burial-place at Rouen, dismally decorated with a scaffold, and a stake and faggots, and the executioner, and a pulpit with a friar therein, and an awful sermon ready. It is very affecting to know that even at that pass the poor girl honoured the mean vermin of a King, who had so used her for his purposes and so abandoned her; and, that while she had been regardless of reproaches heaped upon herself, she spoke out courageously for him.

It was natural in one so young to hold to life. To save her life, she signed a declaration prepared for her—signed it with a cross, for she couldn't write—that all her visions and Voices had come from the Devil. Upon her recanting the past, and protesting that she would never wear a man's dress in future, she was condemned to imprisonment for life, "on the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction."

But, on the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction, the visions and the Voices soon returned. It was quite natural that they should do so, for that kind of disease is much aggravated by fasting, loneliness, and anxiety of mind. It was not only got out of Joan that she considered herself inspired again, but, she was taken in a man's dress, which had been left—to entrap her—in her prison, and which she put on, in her solitude; perhaps, in remembrance of her past glories, perhaps, because the imaginary Voices told her. For this relapse into the sorcery and heresy and anything else you like, she was sentenced to be burnt to death. And, in the market-place of Rouen, in the hideous dress which the monks had invented for such spectacles; with priests and bishops sitting in a gallery looking on, though some had the Christian grace to go away, unable to endure the infamous scene; this shrieking girl—last seen amidst the smoke and fire, holding a crucifix between her hands; last heard, calling upon Christ—was burnt to ashes. They threw her ashes into the river Seine; but they will rise against her murderers on the last day.

From the moment of her capture, neither the French King nor one single man in all his court raised a finger to save her. It is no defence of them that they may have never really believed in her, or that they may have won her victories by their skill and bravery. The more they pretended to believe in her, the more they

had caused her to believe in herself; and she had ever been true to them, ever brave, ever nobly devoted. But, it is no wonder, that they, who were in all things false to themselves, false to one another, false to their country, false to Heaven, false to Earth, should be monsters of ingratitude and treachery to a helpless peasant girl.

In the picturesque old town of Rouen, where weeds and grass grow high on the cathedral towers, and the venerable Norman streets are still warm in the blessed sunlight though the monkish fires that once gleamed horribly upon them have long grown cold, there is a statue of Joan of Arc, in the scene of her last agony, the square to which she has given its present name. I know some statues of modern times—even in the World's metropolis, I think—which commemorate less constancy, less earnestness, smaller claims upon the world's attention, and much greater impostors.

PART THE THIRD.

BAD deeds seldom prosper, happily for mankind; and the English cause gained no advantage from the cruel death of Joan of Arc. For a long time, the war went heavily on. The Duke of Bedford died; the alliance with the Duke of Burgundy was broken; and Lord Talbot became a great general on the English side in France. But, two of the consequences of wars are, Famine—because the people cannot peacefully cultivate the ground—and Pestilence, which comes of want, misery, and suffering. Both these horrors broke out in both countries, and lasted for two wretched years. Then, the war went on again, and came by slow degrees to be so badly conducted by the English government, that, within twenty years from the execution of the Maid of Orleans, of all the great French conquests, the town of Calais alone remained in English hands.

While these victories and defeats were taking place in the course of time, many strange things happened at home. The young King, as he grew up, proved to be very unlike his great father, and showed himself a miserable puny creature. There was no harm in him—he had a great aversion to shedding blood: which was something—but, he was a weak, silly, helpless young man, and a mere shuttlecock to the great lordly battledores about the Court.

Of these battledores, Cardinal Beaufort, a relation of the King, and the Duke of Gloucester, were at first the most powerful. The Duke of Gloucester had a wife, who was nonsensically

accused of practising witchcraft to cause the King's death and lead to her husband's coming to the throne, he being the next heir. She was charged with having, by the help of a ridiculous old woman named Margery (who was called a witch), made a little waxen doll in the King's likeness, and put it before a slow fire that it might gradually melt away. It was supposed, in such cases, that the death of the person whom the doll was made to represent, was sure to happen. Whether the duchess was as ignorant as the rest of them, and really did make such a doll with such an intention, I don't know; but, you and I know very well that she might have made a thousand dolls, if she had been stupid enough, and might have melted them all, without hurting the King or anybody else. However, she was tried for it, and so was old Margery, and so was one of the duke's chaplains, who was charged with having assisted them. Both he and Margery were put to death, and the duchess, after being taken on foot and bearing a lighted candle, three times round the City, as a penance, was imprisoned for life. The duke, himself, took all this pretty quietly, and made as little stir about the matter as if he were rather glad to be rid of the duchess.

But, he was not destined to keep himself out of trouble long. The royal shuttlecock being three-and-twenty, the battledores were very anxious to get him married. The Duke of Gloucester wanted him to marry a daughter of the Count of Armagnac; but, the Cardinal and the Earl of Suffolk were all for MARGARET, the daughter of the King of Sicily, who they knew was a resolute ambitious woman and would govern the King as she chose. To make friends with this lady, the Earl of Suffolk, who went over to arrange the match, consented to accept her for the King's wife without any fortune, and even to give up the two most valuable possessions England then had in France. So, the marriage was arranged, on terms very advantageous to the lady; and Lord Suffolk brought her to England, and she was married at Westminster. On what pretence this queen and her party charged the Duke of Gloucester with high treason within a couple of years, it is impossible to make out, the matter is so confused; but, they pretended that the King's life was in danger, and they took the duke prisoner. A fortnight afterwards, he was found dead in bed (they said), and his body was shown to the people, and Lord Suffolk came in for the best part of his estates. You know by this time how strangely liable state prisoners were to sudden death.

If Cardinal Beaufort had any hand in this matter, it did him no good, for he died within six weeks; thinking it very hard and curious—at eighty years old!—that he could not live to be Pope.

This was the time when England had completed her loss of all her great French conquests. The people charged the loss principally upon the Earl of Suffolk, now a duke, who had made those easy terms about the Royal Marriage, and who, they believed, had even been bought by France. So he was impeached as a traitor, on a great number of charges, but chiefly on accusations of having aided the French King, and of designing to make his own son King of England. The Commons and the people being violent against him, the King was made (by his friends) to interpose to save him, by banishing him for five years, and proroguing the Parliament. The duke had much ado to escape from a London mob, two thousand strong, who lay in wait for him in St. Giles's fields; but, he got down to his own estates in Suffolk, and sailed away from Ipswich. Sailing across the Channel, he sent into Calais to know if he might land there; but, they kept his boat and men in the harbour, until an English ship, carrying a hundred and fifty men and called the Nicholas of the Tower, came alongside his little vessel, and ordered him on board. "Welcome, traitor, as men say," was the captain's grim and not very respectful salutation. He was kept on board, a prisoner, for eight-and-forty hours, and then a small boat appeared rowing toward the ship. As this boat came nearer, it was seen to have in it a block, a rusty sword, and an executioner in a black mask. The duke was handed down into it, and there his head was cut off with six strokes of the rusty sword. Then, the little boat rowed away to Dover beach, where the body was cast out, and left until the duchess claimed it. By whom, high in authority, this murder was committed, has never appeared. No one was ever punished for it.

There now arose in Kent an Irishman, who gave himself the name of Mortimer, but whose real name was JACK CADE. Jack, in imitation of Wat Tyler, though he was a very different and inferior sort of man, addressed the Kentish men upon their wrongs, occasioned by the bad government of England, among so many battledores and such a poor shuttlecock; and the Kentish men rose up to the number of twenty thousand. Their place of assembly was Blackheath, where, headed by Jack, they put forth two papers, which they called "The Complaint of the Commons of Kent," and "The Requests

of the Captain of the Great Assembly in Kent." They then retired to Sevenoaks. The royal army coming up with them here, they beat it and killed their general. Then, Jack dressed himself in the dead general's armour, and led his men to London.

Jack passed into the City from Southwark, over the bridge, and entered it in triumph, giving the strictest orders to his men not to plunder. Having made a show of his forces there, while the citizens looked on quietly, he went back into Southwark in good order, and passed the night. Next day, he came back again, having got hold in the meantime of Lord Say, an unpopular nobleman. Says Jack to the Lord Mayor and judges: "Will you be so good as to make a tribunal in Guildhall, and try me this nobleman?" The court being hastily made, he was found guilty, and Jack and his men cut his head off on Cornhill. They also cut off the head of his son-in-law, and then went back in good order to Southwark again.

But, although the citizens could bear the beheading of an unpopular lord, they could not bear to have their houses pillaged. And it did so happen that Jack, after dinner—perhaps he had drunk a little too much—began to plunder the house where he lodged; upon which, of course, his men began to imitate him. Wherefore, the Londoners took counsel with Lord Scales, who had a thousand soldiers in the Tower; and defended London Bridge, and kept Jack and his people out. This advantage gained, it was resolved by divers great men to divide Jack's army in the old way, by making a great many promises on behalf of the state, that were never intended to be performed. This *did* divide them; some of Jack's men saying that they ought to take the conditions which were offered, and others saying that they ought not, for they were only a snare; some going home at once; others staying where they were; and all doubting and quarrelling among themselves.

Jack, who was in two minds about fighting or accepting a pardon, and who indeed did both, saw at last that there was nothing to expect from his men, and that it was very likely some of them would deliver him up and get a reward of a thousand marks, which was offered for his apprehension. So, after they had travelled and quarrelled all the way from Southwark to Blackheath, and from Blackheath to Rochester, he mounted a good horse and galloped away into Sussex. But there galloped after him, on a better horse, one Alexander Iden, who came up with him, had a hard fight with him, and killed him. Jack's head was set aloft on London

Bridge, with the face looking towards Blackheath, where he had raised his flag; and Alexander Iden got the thousand marks.

It is supposed by some, that the Duke of York, who had been removed from a high post abroad through the Queen's influence, and sent out of the way, to govern Ireland, was at the bottom of this rising of Jack and his men, because he wanted to trouble the government. He claimed (though not yet publicly) to have a better right to the throne than Henry of Lancaster, as one of the family of the Earl of March, whom Henry the Fourth had set aside. Touching this claim, which, being through female relationship, was not according to the usual descent, it is enough to say that Henry the Fourth was the free choice of the people and the Parliament, and that his family had now reigned undisputed for sixty years. The memory of Henry the Fifth was so famous, and the English people loved it so much, that the Duke of York's claim would, perhaps, never have been thought of (it would have been so hopeless) but for the unfortunate circumstance of the present King's being by this time quite an idiot, and the country very ill governed. These two circumstances gave the Duke of York a power he could not otherwise have had.

Whether the Duke knew anything of Jack Cade, or not, he came over from Ireland while Jack's head was on London Bridge; being secretly advised that the Queen was setting up his enemy, the Duke of Somerset, against him. He went to Westminster, at the head of four thousand men, and on his knees before the King, represented to him the bad state of the country, and petitioned him to summon a Parliament to consider it. This the King promised. When the Parliament was summoned, the Duke of York accused the Duke of Somerset, and the Duke of Somerset accused the Duke of York; and, both in and out of Parliament, the followers of each party were full of violence and hatred towards the other. At length the Duke of York put himself at the head of a large force of his tenants, and, in arms, demanded the reformation of the Government. Being shut out of London, he encamped at Dartford, and the royal army encamped at Blackheath. According as either side triumphed, the Duke of York was arrested, or the Duke of Somerset was arrested. The trouble ended, for the moment, in the Duke of York renewing his oath of allegiance, and going in peace to one of his own castles.

Half a year afterwards the Queen gave birth to a son, who was very ill received by the people, and not believed to be the son of the King. It

shows the Duke of York to have been a moderate man, unwilling to involve England in new troubles, that he did not take advantage of the general discontent at this time, but really acted for the public good. He was made a member of the cabinet, and the King being now so much

worse that he could not be carried about and shown to the people with any decency, the duke was made Lord Protector of the kingdom, until the King should recover, or the Prince should come of age. At the same time the Duke of Somerset was committed to the Tower. So,



THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER DOING PENANCE.

now the Duke of Somerset was down, and the Duke of York was up. By the end of the year, however, the King recovered his memory and some spark of sense; upon which the Queen used her power—which recovered with him—to get the Protector disgraced, and her favourite

released. So now the Duke of York was down, and the Duke of Somerset was up.

These ducal ups and downs gradually separated the whole nation into the two parties of York and Lancaster, and led to those terrible civil wars long known as the Wars of the Red

and White Roses, because the red rose was the badge of the House of Lancaster, and the white rose was the badge of the House of York.

The Duke of York, joined by some other powerful noblemen of the White Rose party, and leading a small army, met the King with another small army at St. Alban's, and demanded that the Duke of Somerset should be given up. The poor King, being made to say in answer that he would sooner die, was instantly attacked. The Duke of Somerset was killed, and the King himself was wounded in the neck, and took refuge in the house of a poor tanner. Whereupon, the Duke of York went to him, led him with great submission to the Abbey, and said he was very sorry for what had happened. Having now the King in his possession, he got a Parliament summoned and himself once more made Protector, but, only for a few months; for, on the King getting a little better again, the Queen and her party got him into their possession, and disgraced the Duke once more. So, now the Duke of York was down again.

Some of the best men in power, seeing the danger of these constant changes, tried even then to prevent the Red and the White Rose Wars. They brought about a great council in London between the two parties. The White Roses assembled in Blackfriars, the Red Roses in Whitefriars; and some good priests communicated between them, and made the proceedings known at evening to the King and the judges. They ended in a peaceful agreement that there should be no more quarrelling; and there was a great royal procession to St. Paul's, in which the Queen walked arm-in-arm with her old enemy, the Duke of York, to show the people how comfortable they all were. This state of peace lasted half a year, when a dispute between the Earl of Warwick (one of the Duke's powerful friends) and some of the King's servants at Court, led to an attack upon that Earl—who was a White Rose—and to a sudden breaking out of all old animosities. So, here were greater ups and downs than ever.

There were even greater ups and downs than these, soon after. After various battles, the Duke of York fled to Ireland, and his son the Earl of March to Calais, with their friends the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick; and a Parliament was held declaring them all traitors. Little the worse for this, the Earl of Warwick presently came back, landed in Kent, was joined by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other powerful noblemen and gentlemen, engaged the King's forces at Northampton, signally defeated them,

and took the King himself prisoner, who was found in his tent. Warwick would have been glad, I dare say, to have taken the Queen and Prince too, but they escaped into Wales and thence into Scotland.

The King was carried by the victorious force straight to London, and made to call a new Parliament, which immediately declared that the Duke of York and those other noblemen were not traitors, but excellent subjects. Then, back comes the Duke from Ireland at the head of five hundred horsemen, rides from London to Westminster, and enters the House of Lords. There he laid his hand upon the cloth of gold which covered the empty throne, as if he had half a mind to sit down in it—but he did not. On the Archbishop of Canterbury asking him if he would visit the King, who was in his palace close by, he replied, "I know no one in this country, my lord, who ought not to visit *me*." None of the lords present, spoke a single word; so, the duke went out as he had come in, established himself royally in the King's palace, and, six days afterwards, sent in to the Lords a formal statement of his claim to the throne. The lords went to the King on this momentous subject, and after a great deal of discussion, in which the judges and the other law officers were afraid to give an opinion on either side, the question was compromised. It was agreed that the present King should retain the crown for his life, and that it should then pass to the Duke of York and his heirs.

But, the resolute Queen, determined on asserting her son's right, would hear of no such thing. She came from Scotland to the north of England, where several powerful lords armed in her cause. The Duke of York, for his part, set off with some five thousand men, a little time before Christmas Day, one thousand four hundred and sixty, to give her battle. He lodged at Sandal Castle, near Wakefield, and the Red Roses defied him to come out on Wakefield Green, and fight them then and there. His generals said, he had best wait until his gallant son, the Earl of March, came up with his power; but, he was determined to accept the challenge. He did so, in an evil hour. He was hotly pressed on all sides, two thousand of his men lay dead on Wakefield Green, and he himself was taken prisoner. They set him down in mock state on an ant-hill, and twisted grass about his head, and pretended to pay court to him on their knees, saying, "O King, without a kingdom, and Prince without a people, we hope your gracious Majesty is very well and happy!" They did worse than this; they cut his head off, and

handed it on a pole to the Queen, who laughed with delight when she saw it (you recollect their walking so religiously and comfortably to St. Paul's!), and had it fixed, with a paper crown upon its head, on the walls of York. The Earl of Salisbury lost his head, too; and the Duke of York's second son, a handsome boy who was flying with his tutor over Wakefield Bridge, was stabbed in the heart by a murderous lord—Lord Clifford by name—whose father had been killed by the White Roses in the fight at St. Alban's. There was awful sacrifice of life in this battle, for no quarter was given, and the Queen was wild for revenge. When men unnaturally fight against their own countrymen, they are always observed to be more unnaturally cruel and filled with rage than they are against any other enemy.

But, Lord Clifford had stabbed the second son of the Duke of York—not the first. The eldest son, Edward Earl of March, was at Gloucester; and, vowing vengeance for the death of his father, his brother, and their faithful friends, he began to march against the Queen. He had to turn and fight a great body of Welsh and Irish first, who worried his advance. These he defeated in a great fight at Mortimer's Cross, near Hereford, where he beheaded a number of the Red Roses taken in battle, in retaliation for the beheading of the White Roses at Wakefield. The Queen had the next turn of beheading. Having moved towards London, and falling in, between St. Alban's and Barnet, with the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Norfolk, White Roses both, who were there with an army to oppose her, and had got the King with them; she defeated them with great loss, and struck off the heads of two prisoners of note, who were in the King's tent with him, and to whom the King had promised his protection. Her triumph, however, was very short. She had no treasure, and her army subsisted by plunder. This caused them to be hated and dreaded by the people, and particularly by the London people, who were wealthy. As soon as the Londoners heard that Edward, Earl of March, united with the Earl of Warwick, was advancing towards the city, they refused to send the Queen supplies, and made a great rejoicing.

The Queen and her men retreated with all speed, and Edward and Warwick came on, greeted with loud acclamations on every side. The courage, beauty, and virtues of young Edward could not be sufficiently praised by the whole people. He rode into London like a conqueror, and met with an enthusiastic welcome. A few days afterwards, Lord Falcon-

bridge and the Bishop of Exeter assembled the citizens in St. John's Field, Clerkenwell, and asked them if they would have Henry of Lancaster for their King? To this they all roared, "No, no, no!" and "King Edward! King Edward!" Then, said those noblemen, would they love and serve young Edward? To this they all cried, "Yes, yes!" and threw up their caps and clapped their hands, and cheered tremendously.

Therefore, it was declared that by joining the Queen and not protecting those two prisoners of note, Henry of Lancaster had forfeited the crown; and Edward of York was proclaimed King. He made a great speech to the applauding people at Westminster, and sat down as sovereign of England on that throne, on the golden covering of which his father—worthy of a better fate than the bloody axe which cut the thread of so many lives in England, through so many years—had laid his hand.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE FOURTH.

KING EDWARD THE FOURTH was not quite twenty-one years of age when he took that quiet seat upon the throne of England. The Lancaster party, the Red Roses, were then assembling in great numbers near York, and it was necessary to give them battle instantly. But, the stout Earl of Warwick leading for the young King, and the young King himself closely following him, and the English people crowding round the Royal standard, the White and the Red Roses met, on a wild March day when the snow was falling heavily, at Towton; and there such a furious battle raged between them, that the total loss amounted to forty thousand men—all Englishmen, fighting, upon English ground, against one another. The young King gained the day, took down the heads of his father and brother from the walls of York, and put up the heads of some of the most famous noblemen engaged in the battle on the other side. Then, he went to London and was crowned with great splendour.

A new Parliament met. No fewer than one hundred and fifty of the principal noblemen and gentlemen on the Lancaster side were declared traitors, and the King—who had very little humanity, though he was handsome in

person and agreeable in manners—resolved to do all he could, to pluck up the Red Rose root and branch.

Queen Margaret, however, was still active for her young son. She obtained help from Scotland and from Normandy, and took several important English castles. But, Warwick soon retook them; the Queen lost all her treasure on board ship in a great storm; and both she and her son suffered great misfortunes. Once, in the winter weather, as they were riding through a forest, they were attacked and plundered by a party of robbers; and, when they had escaped from these men and were passing alone and on foot through a thick dark part of the wood, they came, all at once, upon another robber. So the Queen, with a stout heart, took the little Prince by the hand, and going straight up to that robber, said to him, "My friend, this is the young son of your lawful King! I confide him to your care." The robber was surprised, but took the boy in his arms, and faithfully restored him and his mother to their friends. In the end, the Queen's soldiers being beaten and dispersed, she went abroad again, and kept quiet for the present.

Now, all this time, the deposed King Henry was concealed by a Welsh knight, who kept him close in his castle. But, next year, the Lancaster party recovering their spirits, raised a large body of men, and called him out of his retirement, to put him at their head. They were joined by some powerful noblemen who had sworn fidelity to the new King, but who were ready, as usual, to break their oaths, whenever they thought there was anything to be got by it. One of the worst things in the history of the war of the Red and White Roses, is the ease with which these noblemen, who should have set an example of honour to the people, left either side as they took slight offence, or were disappointed in their greedy expectations, and joined the other. Well! Warwick's brother soon beat the Lancastrians, and the false noblemen, being taken, were beheaded without a moment's loss of time. The deposed King had a narrow escape; three of his servants were taken, and one of them bore his cap of estate, which was set with pearls and embroidered with two golden crowns. However, the head to which the cap belonged, got safely into Lancashire, and lay pretty quietly there (the people in the secret being very true) for more than a year. At length, an old monk gave such intelligence as led to Henry's being taken while he was sitting at dinner in a place called Waddington Hall. He was immediately

sent to London, and met at Islington by the Earl of Warwick, by whose directions he was put upon a horse, with his legs tied under it, and paraded three times round the pillory. Then, he was carried off to the Tower, where they treated him well enough.

The White Rose being so triumphant, the young King abandoned himself entirely to pleasure, and led a jovial life. But, thorns were springing up under his bed of roses, as he soon found out. For, having been privately married to ELIZABETH WOODVILLE, a young widow lady, very beautiful and very captivating; and at last resolving to make his secret known, and to declare her his Queen; he gave some offence to the Earl of Warwick, who was usually called the King-Maker, because of his power and influence, and because of his having lent such great help to placing Edward on the throne. This offence was not lessened by the jealousy with which the Nevil family (the Earl of Warwick's), regarded the promotion of the Woodville family. For, the young Queen was so bent on providing for her relations, that she made her father an earl and a great officer of state; married her five sisters to young noblemen of the highest rank; and provided for her younger brother, a young man of twenty, by marrying him to an immensely rich old duchess of eighty. The Earl of Warwick took all this pretty graciously for a man of his proud temper, until the question arose to whom the King's sister, MARGARET, should be married. The Earl of Warwick said, "To one of the French King's sons," and was allowed to go over to the French King to make friendly proposals for that purpose, and to hold all manner of friendly interviews with him. But, while he was so engaged, the Woodville party married the young lady to the Duke of Burgundy! Upon this he came back in great rage and scorn, and shut himself up discontented, in his Castle of Middleham.

A reconciliation, though not a very sincere one, was patched up between the Earl of Warwick and the King, and lasted until the Earl married his daughter, against the King's wishes, to the Duke of Clarence. While the marriage was being celebrated at Calais, the people in the north of England, where the influence of the Nevil family was strongest, broke out into rebellion; their complaint was, that England was oppressed and plundered by the Woodville family, whom they demanded to have removed from power. As they were joined by great numbers of people, and as they openly declared that they were supported by the Earl of War-

wick, the King did not know what to do. At last, as he wrote to the earl beseeching his aid, he and his new son-in-law came over to England, and began to arrange the business by shutting the King up in Middleham Castle in the safe keeping of the Archbishop of York; so England was not only in the strange position of having two kings at once, but they were both prisoners at the same time.

Even as yet, however, the King-Maker was so far true to the King, that he dispersed a new rising of the Lancastrians, took their leader prisoner, and brought him to the King, who ordered him to be immediately executed. He presently allowed the King to return to London, and there innumerable pledges of forgiveness and friendship were exchanged between them, and between the Nevils and the Woodvilles; the King's eldest daughter was promised in marriage to the heir of the Nevil family; and more friendly oaths were sworn, and more friendly promises made, than this book would hold.

They lasted about three months. At the end of that time, the Archbishop of York made a feast for the King, the Earl of Warwick, and the Duke of Clarence, at his house, the Moor, in Hertfordshire. The King was washing his hands before supper, when some one whispered him that a body of a hundred men were lying in ambush outside the house. Whether this were true or untrue, the King took fright, mounted his horse, and rode through the dark night to Windsor Castle. Another reconciliation was patched up between him and the King-Maker, but it was a short one, and it was the last. A new rising took place in Lincolnshire, and the King marched to repress it. Having done so, he proclaimed that both the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence were traitors, who had secretly assisted it, and who had been prepared publicly to join it on the following day. In these dangerous circumstances they both took ship and sailed away to the French court.

And here a meeting took place between the Earl of Warwick and his old enemy, the Dowager Queen Margaret, through whom his father had had his head struck off, and to whom he had been a bitter foe. But, now, when he said that he had done with the ungrateful and perfidious Edward of York, and that henceforth he devoted himself to the restoration of the House of Lancaster, either in the person of her husband or of her little son, she embraced him as if he had ever been her dearest friend. She did more than that; she married her son to his second daughter, the Lady Anne. However agreeable this marriage was to the new friends, it was very disagreeable

to the Duke of Clarence, who perceived that his father-in-law, the King-Maker, would never make *him* King, now. So, being but a weak-minded young traitor, possessed of very little worth or sense, he readily listened to an artful court lady sent over for the purpose, and promised to turn traitor once more, and go over to his brother, King Edward, when a fitting opportunity should come.

The Earl of Warwick, knowing nothing of this, soon redeemed his promise to the Dowager Queen Margaret, by invading England and landing at Plymouth, where he instantly proclaimed King Henry, and summoned all Englishmen between the ages of sixteen and sixty, to join his banner. Then, with his army increasing as he marched along, he went northward, and came so near King Edward, who was in that part of the country, that Edward had to ride hard for it to the coast of Norfolk, and thence to get away in such ships as he could find, to Holland. Thereupon, the triumphant King-Maker and his false son-in-law, the Duke of Clarence, went to London, took the old King out of the Tower, and walked him in a great procession to Saint Paul's Cathedral with the crown upon his head. This did not improve the temper of the Duke of Clarence, who saw himself farther off from being King than ever; but he kept his secret, and said nothing. The Nevil family were restored to all their honours and glories, and the Woodvilles and the rest were disgraced. The King-Maker, less sanguinary than the King, shed no blood except that of the Earl of Worcester, who had been so cruel to the people as to have gained the title of the Butcher. Him they caught hidden in a tree, and him they tried and executed. No other death stained the King-Maker's triumph.

To dispute this triumph, back came King Edward again, next year, landing at Ravenspur, coming on to York, causing all his men to cry "Long live King Henry!" and swearing on the altar, without a blush, that he came to lay no claim to the crown. Now was the time for the Duke of Clarence, who ordered his men to assume the White Rose, and declare for his brother. The Marquis of Montague, though the Earl of Warwick's brother, also declining to fight against King Edward, he went on successfully to London, where the Archbishop of York let him into the City, and where the people made great demonstrations in his favour. For this they had four reasons. Firstly, there were great numbers of the King's adherents hiding in the City and ready to break out; secondly, the King owed them a great deal of money, which they

could never hope to get if he were unsuccessful ; thirdly, there was a young prince to inherit the crown ; and fourthly, the King was gay and handsome, and more popular than a better man might have been with the City ladies. After a stay of only two days with these worthy supporters, the King marched out to Barnet Common to give the Earl of Warwick battle. And now it was to be seen, for the last time, whether the King or the King-Maker was to carry the day.

While the battle was yet pending, the faint-hearted Duke of Clarence began to repent, and sent over secret messages to his father-in-law, offering his services in mediation with the King. But, the Earl of Warwick disdainfully rejected them, and replied that Clarence was false and perjured, and that he would settle the quarrel by the sword. The battle began at four o'clock in the morning and lasted until ten, and during the greater part of the time it was fought in a thick mist—absurdly supposed to be raised by a magician. The loss of life was very great, for the hatred was strong on both sides. The King-Maker was defeated, and the King triumphed. Both the Earl of Warwick and his brother were slain, and their bodies lay in St. Paul's, for some days, as a spectacle to the people.

Margaret's spirit was not broken even by this great blow. Within five days she was in arms again, and raised her standard in Bath, whence she set off with her army, to try and join Lord Pembroke, who had a force in Wales. But, the King, coming up with her outside the town of Tewkesbury, and ordering his brother, the **DUKE OF GLOUCESTER**, who was a brave soldier, to attack her men, she sustained an entire defeat, and was taken prisoner, together with her son, now only eighteen years of age. The conduct of the King to this poor youth was worthy of his cruel character. He ordered him to be led into his tent. "And what," said he, "brought you to England?" "I came to England," replied the prisoner, with a spirit which a man of spirit might have admired in a captive, "to recover my father's kingdom, which descended to him as his right, and from him descends to me, as mine." The King, drawing off his iron gauntlet, struck him with it in the face ; and the Duke of Clarence and some other lords, who were there, drew their noble swords, and killed him.

His mother survived him, a prisoner, for five years ; after her ransom by the King of France, she survived for six years more. Within three weeks of this murder, Henry died one of those convenient sudden deaths which were so com-

mon in the Tower ; in plainer words, he was murdered by the King's order.

Having no particular excitement on his hands after this great defeat of the Lancaster party, and being perhaps desirous to get rid of some of his fat (for he was now getting too corpulent to be handsome), the King thought of making war on France. As he wanted more money for this purpose than the Parliament could give him, though they were usually ready enough for war, he invented a new way of raising it, by sending for the principal citizens of London, and telling them, with a grave face, that he was very much in want of cash, and would take it very kind in them if they would lend him some. It being impossible for them safely to refuse, they complied, and the moneys thus forced from them were called—no doubt to the great amusement of the King and the Court—as if they were free gifts, "Benevolences." What with grants from Parliament, and what with Benevolences, the King raised an army and passed over to Calais. As nobody wanted war, however, the French King made proposals of peace, which were accepted, and a truce was concluded for seven long years. The proceedings between the Kings of France and England on this occasion, were very friendly, very splendid, and very distrustful. They finished with a meeting between the two Kings, on a temporary bridge over the river Somme, where they embraced through two holes in a strong wooden grating like a lion's cage, and made several bows and fine speeches to one another.

It was time, now, that the Duke of Clarence should be punished for his treacheries ; and Fate had his punishment in store. He was, probably, not trusted by the King—for who could trust him who knew him !—and he had certainly a powerful opponent in his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who, being avaricious and ambitious, wanted to marry that widowed daughter of the Earl of Warwick's who had been espoused to the deceased young Prince at Calais. Clarence, who wanted all the family wealth for himself, secreted this lady, whom Richard found disguised as a servant in the City of London, and whom he married ; arbitrators appointed by the King, then divided the property between the brothers. This led to ill-will and mistrust between them. Clarence's wife dying, and he wishing to make another marriage, which was obnoxious to the King, his ruin was hurried by that means, too. At first, the Court struck at his retainers and dependents, and accused some of them of magic and witchcraft, and similar nonsense. Success-

ful against this small game, it then mounted to the Duke himself, who was impeached by his brother the King, in person, on a variety of such charges. He was found guilty, and sentenced to be publicly executed. He never was publicly executed, but he met his death somehow, in the Tower, and, no doubt, through some agency of the King or his brother Gloucester, or both. It was supposed at the time that he was told to choose the manner of his death, and that he chose to be drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine. I hope the story may be true, for it would have been a becoming death for such a miserable creature.

The King survived him some five years. He died in the forty-second year of his life, and the twenty-third of his reign. He had a very good capacity and some good points, but he was selfish, careless, sensual, and cruel. He was a favourite with the people for his showy manners; and the people were a good example to him in the constancy of their attachment. He was penitent on his death-bed for his "benevolences," and other extortions, and ordered restitution to be made to the people who had suffered from them. He also called about his bed the enriched members of the Woodville family, and the proud lords whose honours were of older date, and endeavoured to reconcile them, for the sake of the peaceful succession of his son and the tranquillity of England.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE FIFTH.

THE late King's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, called EDWARD after him, was only thirteen years of age at his father's death. He was at Ludlow Castle with his uncle, the Earl of Rivers. The prince's brother, the Duke of York, only eleven years of age, was in London with his mother. The boldest, most crafty, and most dreaded nobleman in England at that time was their uncle RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, and everybody wondered how the two poor boys would fare with such an uncle for a friend or a foe.

The Queen, their mother, being exceedingly uneasy about this, was anxious that instructions should be sent to Lord Rivers to raise an army to escort the young King safely to London. But, Lord Hastings, who was of the Court party opposed to the Woodvilles, and who disliked

the thought of giving them that power, argued against the proposal, and obliged the Queen to be satisfied with an escort of two thousand horse. The Duke of Gloucester did nothing, at first, to justify suspicion. He came from Scotland (where he was commanding an army) to York, and was there the first to swear allegiance to his nephew. He then wrote a condoling letter to the Queen-Mother, and set off to be present at the coronation in London.

Now, the young King, journeying towards London too, with Lord Rivers and Lord Gray, came to Stony Stratford, as his uncle came to Northampton, about ten miles distant; and when those two lords heard that the Duke of Gloucester was so near, they proposed to the young King that they should go back and greet him in his name. The boy being very willing that they should do so, they rode off and were received with great friendliness, and asked by the Duke of Gloucester to stay and dine with him. In the evening, while they were merry together, up came the Duke of Buckingham with three hundred horsemen; and next morning the two lords and the two dukes, and the three hundred horsemen, rode away together to rejoin the King. Just as they were entering Stony Stratford, the Duke of Gloucester, checking his horse, turned suddenly on the two lords, charged them with alienating from him the affections of his sweet nephew, and caused them to be arrested by the three hundred horsemen and taken back. Then, he and the Duke of Buckingham went straight to the King (whom they had now in their power), to whom they made a show of kneeling down, and offering great love and submission; and then they ordered his attendants to disperse, and took him, alone with them, to Northampton.

A few days afterwards they conducted him to London, and lodged him in the Bishop's Palace. But, he did not remain there long; for, the Duke of Buckingham with a tender face made a speech expressing how anxious he was for the Royal boy's safety, and how much safer he would be in the Tower until his coronation, than he could be anywhere else. So, to the Tower he was taken, very carefully, and the Duke of Gloucester was named Protector of the State.

Although Gloucester had proceeded thus far with a very smooth countenance—and although he was a clever man, fair of speech, and not ill-looking, in spite of one of his shoulders being something higher than the other—and although he had come into the City riding bare-headed at the King's side, and looking very fond of

him—he had made the King's mother more uneasy yet; and when the Royal boy was taken to the Tower, she became so alarmed that she took sanctuary in Westminster with her five daughters.

Nor did she do this without reason, for, the Duke of Gloucester, finding that the lords who were opposed to the Woodville family were faithful to the young King nevertheless, quickly resolved to strike a blow for himself. Accordingly, while those lords met in council at the Tower, he and those who were in his interest met in separate council at his own residence, Crosby Palace, in Bishopsgate Street. Being at last quite prepared, he one day appeared unexpectedly at the council in the Tower, and appeared to be very jocular and merry. He was particularly gay with the Bishop of Ely: praising the strawberries that grew in his garden on Holborn Hill, and asking him to have some gathered that he might eat them at dinner. The Bishop, quite proud of the honour, sent one of his men to fetch some; and the Duke, still very jocular and gay, went out; and the council all said what a very agreeable duke he was! In a little time, however, he came back quite altered—not at all jocular—frowning and fierce—and suddenly said,—

“What do those persons' deserve who have compassed my destruction; I being the King's lawful, as well as natural, protector?”

To this strange question, Lord Hastings replied, that they deserved death, whosoever they were.

“Then,” said the Duke, “I tell you that they are that sorceress my brother's wife;” meaning the Queen: “and that other sorceress, Jane Shore. Who, by witchcraft, have withered my body, and caused my arm to shrink as I now show you.”

He then pulled up his sleeve and showed them his arm, which was shrunken, it is true, but which had been so, as they all very well knew, from the hour of his birth.

Jane Shore, being then the lover of Lord Hastings, as she had formerly been of the late King, that lord knew that he himself was attacked. So, he said, in some confusion, “Certainly, my Lord, if they have done this, they be worthy of punishment.”

“If?” said the Duke of Gloucester; “do you talk to me of ifs? I tell you that they *have* so done, and I will make it good upon thy body, thou traitor!”

With that, he struck the table a great blow with his fist. This was a signal to some of his people outside to cry “Treason!” They im-

mediately did so, and there was a rush into the chamber of so many armed men that it was filled in a moment.

“First,” said the Duke of Gloucester to Lord Hastings, “I arrest thee, traitor! And let him,” he added to the armed men who took him, “have a priest at once, for by St. Paul I will not dine until I have seen his head off!”

Lord Hastings was hurried to the green by the Tower chapel, and there beheaded on a log of wood that happened to be lying on the ground. Then, the Duke dined with a good appetite, and after dinner summoning the principal citizens to attend him, told them that Lord Hastings and the rest had designed to murder both himself and the Duke of Buckingham, who stood by his side, if he had not providentially discovered their design. He requested them to be so obliging as to inform their fellow-citizens of the truth of what he said, and issued a proclamation (prepared and neatly copied out beforehand) to the same effect.

On the same day that the Duke did these things in the Tower, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, the boldest and most undaunted of his men, went down to Pontefract; arrested Lord Rivers, Lord Gray, and two other gentlemen; and publicly executed them on the scaffold, without any trial, for having intended the Duke's death. Three days afterwards the Duke, not to lose time, went down the river to Westminster in his barge, attended by divers bishops, lords, and soldiers, and demanded that the Queen should deliver her second son, the Duke of York, into his safe keeping. The Queen, being obliged to comply, resigned the child after she had wept over him; and Richard of Gloucester placed him with his brother in the Tower. Then, he seized Jane Shore, and, because she had been the lover of the late King, confiscated her property, and got her sentenced to do public penance in the streets by walking in a scanty dress, with bare feet, and carrying a lighted candle, to St. Paul's Cathedral, through the most crowded part of the City.

Having now all things ready for his own advancement, he caused a friar to preach a sermon at the cross which stood in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, in which he dwelt upon the profligate manners of the late King, and upon the late shame of Jane Shore, and hinted that the princes were not his children. “Whereas, good people,” said the friar, whose name was SHAW, “my Lord the Protector, the noble Duke of Gloucester, that sweet prince, the pattern of all the noblest virtues, is the perfect image and express likeness of his father.” There had been

a little plot between the Duke and the friar, that the Duke should appear in the crowd at this moment, when it was expected that the people would cry "Long live King Richard!" But, either through the friar saying the words too soon, or through the Duke's coming too late, the Duke and the words did not come together, and the people only laughed, and the friar sneaked off ashamed.

The Duke of Buckingham was a better hand at such business than the friar, so he went to the Guildhall the next day, and addressed the citizens in the Lord Protector's behalf. A few dirty men, who had been hired and stationed there for the purpose, crying when he had done, "God save King Richard!" he made them a great bow, and thanked them with all his heart. Next day, to make an end of it, he went with the mayor and some lords and citizens to Bayard Castle, by the river, where Richard then was, and read an address, humbly entreating him to accept the Crown of England. Richard, who looked down upon them out of a window and pretended to be in great uneasiness and alarm, assured them there was nothing he desired less, and that his deep affection for his nephews forbade him to think of it. To this the Duke of Buckingham replied, with pretended warmth, that the free people of England would never submit to his nephew's rule, and that if Richard, who was the lawful heir, refused the Crown, why then they must find some one else to wear it. The Duke of Gloucester returned, that since he used that strong language, it became his painful duty to think no more of himself, and to accept the Crown.

Upon that, the people cheered and dispersed; and the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Buckingham passed a pleasant evening, talking over the play they had just acted with so much success, and every word of which they had prepared together.

CHAPTER XXV.

ENGLAND UNDER RICHARD THE THIRD.

KING RICHARD THE THIRD was up betimes in the morning, and went to Westminster Hall. In the Hall was a marble seat, upon which he sat himself down between two great noblemen, and told the people that he began the new reign in that place, because the first duty of a sovereign was to administer the laws equally to all, and to

maintain justice. He then mounted his horse and rode back to the City, where he was received by the clergy and the crowd as if he really had a right to the throne, and really were a just man. The clergy and the crowd must have been rather ashamed of themselves in secret, I think, for being such poor-spirited knaves.

The new King and his Queen were soon crowned with a great deal of show and noise, which the people liked very much; and then the King set forth on a royal progress through his dominions. He was crowned a second time at York, in order that the people might have show and noise enough; and wherever he went was received with shouts of rejoicing—from a good many people of strong lungs, who were paid to strain their throats in crying, "God save King Richard!" The plan was so successful that I am told it has been imitated since, by other usurpers, in other progresses through other dominions.

While he was on this journey, King Richard stayed a week at Warwick. And from Warwick he sent instructions home for one of the wickedest murders that ever was done—the murder of the two young princes, his nephews, who were shut up in the Tower of London.

Sir Robert Brackenbury was at that time Governor of the Tower. To him, by the hands of a messenger named JOHN GREEN, did King Richard send a letter, ordering him by some means to put the two young princes to death. But Sir Robert—I hope because he had children of his own, and loved them—sent John Green back again, riding and spurring along the dusty roads, with the answer that he could not do so horrible a piece of work. The King, having frowningly considered a little, called to him SIR JAMES TYRREL, his master of the horse, and to him gave authority to take command of the Tower, whenever he would, for twenty-four hours, and to keep all the keys of the Tower during that space of time. Tyrrel, well knowing what was wanted, looked about him for two hardened ruffians, and chose JOHN DIGHTON, one of his own grooms, and MILES FOREST, who was a murderer by trade. Having secured these two assistants, he went, upon a day in August, to the Tower, showed his authority from the King, took the command for four-and-twenty hours, and obtained possession of the keys. And when the black night came, he went creeping, creeping, like a guilty villain as he was, up the dark stone winding stairs, and along the dark stone passages, until he came to the door of the room where the two young

princes, having said their prayers, lay fast asleep, clasped in each other's arms. And while he watched and listened at the door, he sent in those evil demons, John Dighton and Miles Forest, who smothered the two princes with the bed and pillows, and carried their bodies down the stairs, and buried them under a great heap of stones at the staircase foot. And when the day came, he gave up the command of the Tower, and restored the keys, and hurried away without once looking behind him; and Sir Robert Brackenbury went with fear and sadness to the princes' room, and found the princes gone for ever.

You know, through all this history, how true it is that traitors are never true, and you will not be surprised to learn that the Duke of Buckingham soon turned against King Richard, and joined a great conspiracy that was formed to dethrone him, and to place the crown upon its rightful owner's head. Richard had meant to keep the murder secret; but when he heard through his spies that this conspiracy existed, and that many lords and gentlemen drank in secret to the healths of the two young princes in the Tower, he made it known that they were dead. The conspirators, though thwarted for a moment, soon resolved to set up for the crown against the murderous Richard, HENRY Earl of Richmond, grandson of Catherine: that widow of Henry the Fifth who married Owen Tudor. And as Henry was of the house of Lancaster, they proposed that he should marry the Princess Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the late King, now the heiress of the house of York, and thus by uniting the rival families put an end to the fatal wars of the Red and White Roses. All being settled, a time was appointed for Henry to come over from Brittany, and for a great rising against Richard to take place in several parts of England at the same hour. On a certain day, therefore, in October, the revolt took place; but unsuccessfully. Richard was prepared, Henry was driven back at sea by a storm, his followers in England were dispersed, and the Duke of Buckingham was taken, and at once beheaded in the market-place at Salisbury.

The time of his success was a good time, Richard thought, for summoning a Parliament and getting some money. So, a Parliament was called, and it flattered and fawned upon him as much as he could possibly desire, and declared him to be the rightful King of England, and his only son Edward, then eleven years of age, the next heir to the throne.

Richard knew full well that, let the Parliament say what it would, the Princess Elizabeth

was remembered by people as the heiress of the house of York; and having accurate information besides, of its being designed by the conspirators to marry her to Henry of Richmond, he felt that it would much strengthen him and weaken them, to be beforehand with them, and marry her to his son. With this view he went to the Sanctuary at Westminster, where the late King's widow and her daughter still were, and besought them to come to Court: where (he swore by anything and everything) they should be safely and honourably entertained. They came, accordingly, but had scarcely been at Court a month when his son died suddenly—or was poisoned—and his plan was crushed to pieces.

In this extremity, King Richard, always active, thought, "I must make another plan." And he made the plan of marrying the Princess Elizabeth himself, although she was his niece. There was one difficulty in the way: his wife, the Queen Anne, was alive. But, he knew (remembering his nephews) how to remove that obstacle, and he made love to the Princess Elizabeth, telling her he felt perfectly confident that the Queen would die in February. The Princess was not a very scrupulous young lady, for, instead of rejecting the murderer of her brothers with scorn and hatred, she openly declared she loved him dearly; and, when February came and the Queen did not die, she expressed her impatient opinion that she was too long about it. However, King Richard was not so far out in his prediction, but that she died in March—he took good care of that—and then this precious pair hoped to be married. But they were disappointed, for the idea of such a marriage was so unpopular in the country, that the King's chief counsellors, RATCLIFFE and CATESBY, would by no means undertake to propose it, and the King was even obliged to declare in public that he had never thought of such a thing.

He was, by this time, dreaded and hated by all classes of his subjects. His nobles deserted every day to Henry's side; he dared not call another Parliament, lest his crimes should be denounced there; and for want of money, he was obliged to get Benevolences from the citizens, which exasperated them all against him. It was said too, that, being stricken by his conscience, he dreamed frightful dreams, and started up in the night-time, wild with terror and remorse. Active to the last, through all this, he issued vigorous proclamations against Henry of Richmond and all his followers, when he heard that they were coming against him with a Fleet

from France; and took the field as fierce and savage as a wild boar—the animal represented on his shield.

Henry of Richmond landed with six thousand men at Milford Haven, and came on against King Richard, then encamped at Leicester with an army twice as great, through North Wales. On Bosworth Field the two armies met; and Richard, looking along Henry's ranks, and seeing them crowded with the English nobles who had abandoned him, turned pale when he beheld the powerful Lord Stanley and his son (whom he had tried hard to retain) among them. But, he was as brave as he was wicked, and plunged into the thickest of the fight. He was riding hither and thither, laying about him in all directions, when he observed the Earl of Northumberland—one of his few great allies—to stand inactive, and the main body of his troops to hesitate. At the same moment, his desperate glance caught Henry of Richmond among a little group of his knights. Riding hard at him, and crying "Treason!" he killed his standard-bearer, fiercely unhorsed another gentleman, and aimed a powerful stroke at Henry himself, to cut him down. But, Sir William Stanley parried it as it fell, and before Richard could raise his arm again, he was borne down in a press of numbers, unhorsed, and killed. Lord Stanley picked up the crown, all bruised and trampled, and stained with blood, and put it upon Richmond's head, amid loud and rejoicing cries of "Long live King Henry!"

That night, a horse was led up to the church of the Grey Friars at Leicester; across whose back was tied, like some worthless sack, a naked body brought there for burial. It was the body of the last of the Plantagenet line, King Richard the Third, usurper and murderer, slain at the battle of Bosworth Field in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of two years.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE SEVENTH.

KING HENRY THE SEVENTH did not turn out to be as fine a fellow as the nobility and people hoped, in the first joy of their deliverance from Richard the Third. He was very cold, crafty, and calculating, and would do almost anything for money. He possessed considerable ability, but his chief merit appears to have been that he was not cruel when there was nothing to be got by it.

The new King had promised the nobles who had espoused his cause that he would marry the Princess Elizabeth. The first thing he did, was, to direct her to be removed from the castle of Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire, where Richard had placed her, and restored to the care of her mother in London. The young Earl of Warwick, Edward Plantagenet, son and heir of the late Duke of Clarence, had been kept a prisoner in the same old Yorkshire Castle with her. This boy, who was now fifteen, the new King placed in the Tower for safety. Then he came to London in great state, and gratified the people with a fine procession; on which kind of show he often very much relied for keeping them in good humour. The sports and feasts which took place were followed by a terrible fever, called the Sweating Sickness; of which great numbers of people died. Lord Mayors and Aldermen are thought to have suffered most from it; whether, because they were in the habit of over-eating themselves, or because they were very jealous of preserving filth and nuisances in the City (as they have been since), I don't know.

The King's coronation was postponed on account of the general ill-health, and he afterwards deferred his marriage, as if he were not very anxious that it should take place: and, even after that, deferred the Queen's coronation so long that he gave offence to the York party. However, he set these things right in the end, by hanging some men and seizing on the rich possessions of others; by granting more popular pardons to the followers of the late King than could, at first, be got from him; and, by employing about his Court, some not very scrupulous persons who had been employed in the previous reign.

As this reign was principally remarkable for two very curious impostures which have become famous in history, we will make those two stories its principal feature.

There was a priest at Oxford of the name of Simons, who had for a pupil a handsome boy named Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker. Partly to gratify his own ambitious ends, and partly to carry out the designs of a secret party formed against the King, this priest declared that his pupil, the boy, was no other than the young Earl of Warwick; who (as everybody might have known) was safely locked up in the Tower of London. The priest and the boy went over to Ireland; and, at Dublin, enlisted in their cause all ranks of the people: who seem to have been generous enough, but exceedingly irrational. The Earl of Kildare, the governor of Ireland, declared that he believed the boy to

be what the priest represented; and the boy, who had been well tutored by the priest, told them so many descriptions of the Royal Family, that they were perpetually shouting and hurrahing, and drinking his health, and making all kinds of noisy and thirsty demonstrations, to express their belief in him. Nor was this feeling confined to Ireland alone, for the Earl of Lincoln—whom the late usurper had named as his successor—went over to the young Pretender; and, after holding a secret correspondence with the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy—the sister of Edward the Fourth, who detested the present King and all his race—sailed to Dublin with two thousand German soldiers of her providing. In this promising state of the boy's fortunes, he was crowned there, with a crown taken off the head of a statue of the Virgin Mary; and was then, according to the Irish custom of those days, carried home on the shoulders of a big chieftain possessing a great deal more strength than sense. Father Simons, you may be sure, was mighty busy at the coronation.

Ten days afterwards, the Germans, and the Irish, and the priest, and the boy, and the Earl of Lincoln, all landed in Lancashire to invade England. The King, who had good intelligence of their movements, set up his standard at Nottingham, where vast numbers resorted to him every day; while the Earl of Lincoln could gain but very few. With this small force he tried to make for the town of Newark; but the King's army getting between him and that place, he had no choice but to risk a battle at Stoke. It soon ended in the complete destruction of the Pretender's forces, one half of whom were killed; among them, the Earl himself. The priest and the baker's boy were taken prisoners. The priest, after confessing the trick, was shut up in prison, where he afterwards died—suddenly perhaps. The boy was taken into the King's kitchen and made a turnspit. He was afterwards raised to the station of one of the King's falconers; and so ended this strange imposition.

There seems reason to suspect that the Dowager Queen—always a restless and busy woman—had had some share in tutoring the baker's son. The King was very angry with her, whether or no. He seized upon her property, and shut her up in a convent at Bermondsey.

One might suppose that the end of this story would have put the Irish people on their guard; but they were quite ready to receive a second impostor, as they had received the first, and that same troublesome Duchess of Burgundy soon

gave them the opportunity. All of a sudden there appeared at Cork, in a vessel arriving from Portugal, a young man of excellent abilities, of very handsome appearance and most winning manners, who declared himself to be Richard, Duke of York, the second son of King Edward the Fourth. "O," said some, even of those ready Irish believers, "but surely that young Prince was murdered by his uncle in the Tower!"—"It is supposed so," said the engaging young man; "and my brother *was* killed in that gloomy prison; but I escaped—it don't matter how, at present—and have been wandering about the world for seven long years." This explanation being quite satisfactory to numbers of the Irish people, they began again to shout and to hurrah, and to drink his health, and to make the noisy and thirsty demonstrations all over again. And the big chieftain in Dublin began to look out for another coronation, and another young King to be carried home on his back.

Now, King Henry being then on bad terms with France, the French King, Charles the Eighth, saw that, by pretending to believe in the handsome young man, he could trouble his enemy sorely. So, he invited him over to the French Court, and appointed him a body-guard, and treated him in all respects as if he really were the Duke of York. Peace, however, being soon concluded between the two Kings, the pretended Duke was turned adrift, and wandered for protection to the Duchess of Burgundy. She, after feigning to inquire into the reality of his claims, declared him to be the very picture of her dear departed brother; gave him a body-guard at her Court, of thirty halberdiers; and called him by the sounding name of the White Rose of England.

The leading members of the White Rose party in England sent over an agent, named Sir Robert Clifford, to ascertain whether the White Rose's claims were good; the King also sent over his agents to inquire into the Rose's history. The White Roses declared the young man to be really the Duke of York; the King declared him to be PERKIN WARBECK, the son of a merchant of the city of Tournay, who had acquired his knowledge of England, its language and manners, from the English merchants who traded in Flanders; it was also stated by the Royal agents that he had been in the service of Lady Brompton, the wife of an exiled English nobleman, and that the Duchess of Burgundy had caused him to be trained and taught, expressly for this deception. The King then required the Archduke Philip—who was the sovereign of Burgundy—to banish this new Pretender, or to

deliver him up; but, as the Archduke replied that he could not control the Duchess in her own land, the King, in revenge, took the market of English cloth away from Antwerp, and prevented all commercial intercourse between the two countries.

He also, by arts and bribes, prevailed on Sir Robert Clifford to betray his employers; and he denouncing several famous English noblemen as being secretly the friends of Perkin Warbeck, the King had three of the foremost executed at once. Whether he pardoned the remainder because



LAMBERT SIMNEL.

they were poor, I do not know; but it is only too probable that he refused to pardon one famous nobleman against whom the same Clifford soon afterwards informed separately, because he was rich. This was no other than Sir William Stanley, who had saved the King's life at the

battle of Bosworth Field. It is very doubtful whether his treason amounted to much more than his having said, that if he were sure the young man was the Duke of York, he would not take arms against him. Whatever he had done he admitted, like an honourable spirit;

and he lost his head for it, and the covetous King gained all his wealth.

Perkin Warbeck kept quiet for three years ; but, as the Flemings began to complain heavily of the loss of their trade by the stoppage of the Antwerp market on his account, and that it was not unlikely that they might even go so far as to take his life, or give him up, he found it necessary to do something. Accordingly he made a desperate sally, and landed, with only a few hundred men, on the coast of Deal. But he was soon glad to get back to the place from whence he came ; for the country people rose against his followers, killed a great many, and took a hundred and fifty prisoners : who were all driven to London, tied together with ropes, like a team of cattle. Every one of them was hanged on some part or other of the sea-shore ; in order, that if any more men should come over with Perkin Warbeck, they might see the bodies as a warning before they landed.

Then the wary King, by making a treaty of commerce with the Flemings, drove Perkin Warbeck out of that country ; and, by completely gaining over the Irish to his side, deprived him of that asylum too. He wandered away to Scotland, and told his story at that Court. King James the Fourth of Scotland, who was no friend to King Henry, and had no reason to be (for King Henry had bribed his Scotch lords to betray him more than once ; but had never succeeded in his plots), gave him a great reception, called him his cousin, and gave him in marriage the Lady Catherine Gordon, a beautiful and charming creature related to the royal house of Stuart.

Alarmed by this successful reappearance of the Pretender, the King still undermined, and bought, and bribed, and kept his doings and Perkin Warbeck's story in the dark, when he might, one would imagine, have rendered the matter clear to all England. But, for all this bribing of the Scotch lords at the Scotch King's Court, he could not procure the Pretender to be delivered up to him. James, though not very particular in many respects, would not betray him ; and the ever-busy Duchess of Burgundy so provided him with arms, and good soldiers, and with money besides, that he had soon a little army of fifteen hundred men of various nations. With these, and aided by the Scottish King in person, he crossed the border into England, and made a proclamation to the people, in which he called the King " Henry Tudor ;" offered large rewards to any who should take or distress him ; and announced himself as King Richard the Fourth come to receive the homage of his faithful subjects. His faithful subjects, however,

cared nothing for him, and hated his faithful troops : who, being of different nations, quarrelled also among themselves. Worse than this, if worse were possible, they began to plunder the country ; upon which the White Rose said, that he would rather lose his rights, than gain them through the miseries of the English people. The Scottish King made a jest of his scruples ; but they and their whole force went back again without fighting a battle.

The worst consequence of this attempt was, that a rising took place among the people of Cornwall, who considered themselves too heavily taxed to meet the charges of the expected war. Stimulated by Flammock, a lawyer, and Joseph, a blacksmith, and joined by Lord Audley and some other country gentlemen, they marched on all the way to Deptford Bridge, where they fought a battle with the King's army. They were defeated—though the Cornish men fought with great bravery—and the lord was beheaded, and the lawyer and the blacksmith were hanged, drawn, and quartered. The rest were pardoned. The King, who believed every man to be as avaricious as himself, and thought that money could settle anything, allowed them to make bargains for their liberty with the soldiers who had taken them.

Perkin Warbeck, doomed to wander up and down, and never to find rest anywhere—a sad fate : almost a sufficient punishment for an imposture, which he seems in time to have half believed himself—lost his Scottish refuge through a truce being made between the two Kings ; and found himself, once more, without a country before him in which he could lay his head. But James (always honourable and true to him, alike when he melted down his plate, and even the great gold chain he had been used to wear, to pay soldiers in his cause ; and now, when that cause was lost and hopeless) did not conclude the treaty, until he had safely departed out of the Scottish dominions. He, and his beautiful wife, who was faithful to him under all reverses, and left her state and home to follow his poor fortunes, were put aboard ship with everything necessary for their comfort and protection, and sailed for Ireland.

But, the Irish people had had enough of counterfeit Earls of Warwick and Dukes of York, for one while ; and would give the White Rose no aid. So, the White Rose—encircled by thorns indeed—resolved to go with his beautiful wife to Cornwall as a forlorn resource, and see what might be made of the Cornish men, who had risen so valiantly a little while before, and had fought so bravely at Deptford Bridge.

To Whitsand Bay, in Cornwall, accordingly, came Perkin Warbeck and his wife; and the lovely lady he shut up for safety in the Castle of St. Michael's Mount, and then marched into Devonshire at the head of three thousand Cornish men. These were increased to six thousand by the time of his arrival in Exeter; but there the people made a stout resistance, and he went on to Taunton, where he came in sight of the King's army. The stout Cornish men, although they were few in number, and badly armed, were so bold that they never thought of retreating; but bravely looked forward to a battle on the morrow. Unhappily for them, the man who was possessed of so many engaging qualities, and who attracted as many people to his side when he had nothing else with which to tempt them, was not as brave as they. In the night, when the two armies lay opposite to each other, he mounted a swift horse and fled. When morning dawned, the poor confiding Cornish men, discovering that they had no leader, surrendered to the King's power. Some of them were hanged, and the rest were pardoned and went miserably home.

Before the King pursued Perkin Warbeck to the sanctuary of Beaulieu in the New Forest, where it was soon known that he had taken refuge, he sent a body of horsemen to Saint Michael's Mount, to seize his wife. She was soon taken and brought as a captive before the King. But she was so beautiful, and so good, and so devoted to the man in whom she believed, that the King regarded her with compassion, treated her with great respect, and placed her at Court, near the Queen's person. And many years after Perkin Warbeck was no more, and when his strange story had become like a nursery tale, *she* was called the White Rose, by the people, in remembrance of her beauty.

The sanctuary at Beaulieu was soon surrounded by the King's men; and the King, pursuing his usual dark artful ways, sent pretended friends to Perkin Warbeck to persuade him to come out and surrender himself. This he soon did; the King having taken a good look at the man of whom he had heard so much—from behind a screen—directed him to be well mounted, and to ride behind him at a little distance, guarded, but not bound in any way. So they entered London with the King's favourite show—a procession; and some of the people hooted as the Pretender rode slowly through the streets to the Tower; but the greater part were quiet, and very curious to see him. From the Tower, he was taken to the Palace at Westminster, and there lodged like a gentleman, though closely

watched. He was examined every now and then as to his imposture; but the King was so secret in all he did, that even then he gave it a consequence, which it cannot be supposed to have in itself deserved.

At last Perkin Warbeck ran away, and took refuge in another sanctuary near Richmond in Surrey. From this he was again persuaded to deliver himself up; and, being conveyed to London, he stood in the stocks for a whole day, outside Westminster Hall, and there read a paper purporting to be his full confession, and relating his history as the King's agents had originally described it. He was then shut up in the Tower again, in the company of the Earl of Warwick, who had now been there for fourteen years: ever since his removal out of Yorkshire, except when the King had had him at Court, and had shown him to the people, to prove the imposture of the Baker's boy. It is but too probable, when we consider the crafty character of Henry the Seventh, that these two were brought together for a cruel purpose. A plot was soon discovered between them and the keepers, to murder the Governor, get possession of the keys, and proclaim Perkin Warbeck as King Richard the Fourth. That there was some such plot, is likely; that they were tempted into it, is at least as likely; that the unfortunate Earl of Warwick—last male of the Plantagenet line—was too unused to the world, and too ignorant and simple to know much about it, whatever it was, is perfectly certain; and that it was the King's interest to get rid of him, is no less so. He was beheaded on Tower Hill, and Perkin Warbeck was hanged at Tyburn.

Such was the end of the pretended Duke of York, whose shadowy history was made more shadowy—and ever will be—by the mystery and craft of the King. If he had turned his great natural advantages to a more honest account, he might have lived a happy and respected life, even in those days. But he died upon a gallows at Tyburn, leaving the Scottish lady, who had loved him so well, kindly protected at the Queen's Court. After some time she forgot her old loves and troubles, as many people do with Time's merciful assistance, and married a Welsh gentleman. Her second husband, SIR MATTHEW CRADOC, more honest and more happy than her first, lies beside her in a tomb in the old church of Swansea.

The ill-blood between France and England in this reign, arose out of the continued plotting of the Duchess of Burgundy, and disputes respecting the affairs of Brittany. The King feigned to be very patriotic, indignant, and warlike; but

he always contrived so as never to make war in reality, and always to make money. His taxation of the people, on pretence of war with France, involved, at one time, a very dangerous insurrection, headed by Sir John Egremont, and a common man called John à Chambre. But it was subdued by the royal forces, under the command of the Earl of Surrey. The knighted John escaped to the Duchess of Burgundy, who was ever ready to receive any one who gave the King trouble; and the plain John was hanged at York, in the midst of a number of his men, but on a much higher gibbet, as being a greater traitor. Hung high or hung low, however, hanging is much the same to the person hung.

Within a year after her marriage, the Queen had given birth to a son, who was called Prince Arthur, in remembrance of the old British Prince of romance and story; and who, when all these events had happened, being then in his fifteenth year, was married to CATHERINE, the daughter of the Spanish monarch, with great rejoicings and bright prospects; but in a very few months he sickened and died. As soon as the King had recovered from his grief, he thought it a pity that the fortune of the Spanish Princess, amounting to two hundred thousand crowns, should go out of the family; and therefore arranged that the young widow should marry his second son HENRY, then twelve years of age, when he too should be fifteen. There were objections to this marriage on the part of the clergy; but, as the infallible Pope was gained over, and, as he *must* be right, that settled the business for the time. The King's eldest daughter was provided for, and a long course of disturbance was considered to be set at rest, by her being married to the Scottish King.

And now the Queen died. When the King had got over that grief too, his mind once more reverted to his darling money for consolation, and he thought of marrying the Dowager Queen of Naples, who was immensely rich: but, as it turned out not to be practicable to gain the money, however practicable it might have been to gain the lady, he gave up the idea. He was not so fond of her but that he soon proposed to marry the Dowager Duchess of Savoy; and, soon afterwards, the widow of the King of Castile, who was raving mad. But he made a money-bargain instead, and married neither.

The Duchess of Burgundy, among the other discontented people to whom she had given refuge, had sheltered EDMUND DE LA POLE (younger brother of that Earl of Lincoln who was killed at Stoke), now Earl of Suffolk. The King had prevailed upon him to return to the

marriage of Prince Arthur; but, he soon afterwards went away again; and then the King, suspecting a conspiracy, resorted to his favourite plan of sending him some treacherous friends, and buying of those scoundrels the secrets they disclosed or invented. Some arrests and executions took place in consequence. In the end, the King, on a promise of not taking his life, obtained possession of the person of Edmund de la Pole, and shut him up in the Tower.

This was his last enemy. If he had lived much longer he would have made many more among the people, by the grinding exaction to which he constantly exposed them, and by the tyrannical acts of his two prime favourites in all money-raising matters, EDMUND DUDLEY and RICHARD EMPSON. But Death—the enemy who is not to be bought off or deceived, and on whom no money, and no treachery, has any effect—presented himself at this juncture, and ended the King's reign. He died of the gout, on the twenty-second of April, one thousand five hundred and nine, and in the fifty-third year of his age, after reigning twenty-four years; he was buried in the beautiful Chapel of Westminster Abbey, which he had himself founded, and which still bears his name.

It was in this reign that the great CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, on behalf of Spain, discovered what was then called The New World. Great wonder, interest, and hope of wealth being awakened in England thereby, the King and the merchants of London and Bristol fitted out an English expedition for further discoveries in the New World, and entrusted it to SEBASTIAN CABOT, of Bristol, the son of a Venetian pilot there. He was very successful in his voyage, and gained high reputation, both for himself and England.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE EIGHTH, CALLED
BLUFF KING HAL AND BURLY KING HARRY.

PART THE FIRST.

WE now come to King Henry the Eighth, whom it has been too much the fashion to call "Bluff King Hal," and "Burlly King Harry," and other fine names; but whom I shall take the liberty to call, plainly, one of the most detestable villains that ever drew breath. You will be able to judge, long before we come to the end of his life, whether he deserves the character.

He was just eighteen years of age when he came to the throne. People said he was handsome then; but I don't believe it. He was a big, burly, noisy, small-eyed, large-faced, double-chinned, swinish-looking fellow in later life (as we know from the likenesses of him, painted by the famous HANS HOLBEIN), and it is not easy to believe that so bad a character can ever have been veiled under a prepossessing appearance.

He was anxious to make himself popular; and the people, who had long disliked the late King, were very willing to believe that he deserved to be so. He was extremely fond of show and display, and so were they. Therefore there was great rejoicing when he married the Princess Catherine, and when they were both crowned. And the King fought at tournaments and always came off victorious—for the courtiers took care of that—and there was a general outcry that he was a wonderful man. Empson, Dudley, and their supporters were accused of a variety of crimes they had never committed, instead of the offences of which they really had been guilty; and they were pilloried, and set upon horses with their faces to the tails, and knocked about and beheaded, to the satisfaction of the people, and the enrichment of the King.

The Pope, so indefatigable in getting the world into trouble, had mixed himself up in a war on the continent of Europe, occasioned by the reigning Princes of little quarrelling states in Italy having at various times married into other Royal families, and so led to *their* claiming a share in those petty Governments. The King, who discovered that he was very fond of the Pope, sent a herald to the King of France, to say that he must not make war upon that holy personage, because he was the father of all Christians. As the French King did not mind this relationship in the least, and also refused to admit a claim King Henry made to certain lands in France, war was declared between the two countries. Not to perplex this story with an account of the tricks and designs of all the sovereigns who were engaged in it, it is enough to say that England made a blundering alliance with Spain, and got stupidly taken in by that country; which made its own terms with France when it could, and left England in the lurch. SIR EDWARD HOWARD, a bold admiral, son of the Earl of Surrey, distinguished himself by his bravery against the French in this business; but, unfortunately, he was more brave than wise, for, skimming into the French harbour of Brest with only a few row-boats, he attempted (in revenge for the defeat and death of SIR THOMAS KNIVETT, another bold English admiral) to take

some strong French ships, well defended with batteries of cannon. The upshot was that he was left on board of one of them (in consequence of its shooting away from his own boat), with not more than about a dozen men, and was thrown into the sea and drowned; though not until he had taken from his breast his gold chain and gold whistle, which were the signs of his office, and had cast them into the sea to prevent their being made a boast of by the enemy. After this defeat—which was a great one, for Sir Edward Howard was a man of valour and fame—the King took it into his head to invade France in person; first executing that dangerous Earl of Suffolk whom his father had left in the Tower, and appointing Queen Catherine to the charge of his kingdom in his absence. He sailed to Calais, where he was joined by MAXIMILIAN, Emperor of Germany, who pretended to be his soldier, and who took pay in his service: with a good deal of nonsense of that sort, flattering enough to the vanity of a vain blusterer. The King might be successful enough in sham fights; but his idea of real battles, chiefly consisted in pitching silken tents of bright colours that were ignominiously blown down by the wind, and in making a vast display of gaudy flags and golden curtains. Fortune, however, favoured him better than he deserved; for, after much waste of time in tent pitching, flag flying, gold curtaining, and other such masquerading, he gave the French battle at a place called Guinegate: where they took such an unaccountable panic, and fled with such swiftness, that it was ever afterwards called by the English the Battle of Spurs. Instead of following up his advantage, the King, finding that he had had enough of real fighting, came home again.

The Scottish King, though nearly related to Henry by marriage, had taken part against him in this war. The Earl of Surrey, as the English general, advanced to meet him when he came out of his own dominions and crossed the river Tweed. The two armies came up with one another when the Scottish King had also crossed the river Till, and was encamped upon the last of the Cheviot Hills, called the Hill of Flodden. Along the plain below it, the English, when the hour of battle came, advanced. The Scottish army, which had been drawn up in five great bodies, then came steadily down in perfect silence. So they, in their turn, advanced to meet the English army, which came on in one long line; and they attacked it with a body of spearmen, under LORD HOME. At first they had the best of it; but the English recovered themselves so bravely, and fought with such

valour, that, when the Scottish King had almost made his way up to the Royal standard, he was slain, and the whole Scottish power routed. Ten thousand Scottish men lay dead that day on Flodden Field; and among them, numbers of the nobility and gentry. For a long time after-

wards, the Scottish peasantry used to believe that their King had not been really killed in this battle, because no Englishman had found an iron belt he wore about his body as a penance for having been an unnatural and undutiful son. But, whatever became of his belt, the English



SIR EDWARD HOWARD.

had his sword and dagger, and the ring from his finger, and his body too, covered with wounds. There is no doubt of it; for it was seen and recognised by English gentlemen who had known the Scottish King well.

When King Henry was making ready to renew
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the war in France, the French King was contemplating peace. His queen, dying at this time, he proposed, though he was upwards of fifty years old, to marry King Henry's sister, the Princess Mary, who, besides being only sixteen, was betrothed to the Duke of Suffolk. As the

inclinations of young Princesses were not much considered in such matters, the marriage was concluded, and the poor girl was escorted to France, where she was immediately left as the French King's bride, with only one of all her English attendants. That one was a pretty young girl named ANNE BOLEYN, niece of the Earl of Surrey, who had been made Duke of Norfolk, after the victory of Flodden Field. Anne Boleyn's is a name to be remembered, as you will presently find.

And now the French King, who was very proud of his young wife, was preparing for many years of happiness, and she was looking forward, I dare say, to many years of misery, when he died within three months, and left her a young widow. The new French monarch, FRANCIS THE FIRST, seeing how important it was to his interests that she should take for her second husband no one but an Englishman, advised her first lover, the Duke of Suffolk, when King Henry sent him over to France to fetch her home, to marry her. The Princess being herself so fond of that Duke, as to tell him that he must either do so then, or for ever lose her, they were wedded; and Henry afterwards forgave them. In making interest with the King, the Duke of Suffolk had addressed his most powerful favourite and adviser, THOMAS WOLSEY—a name very famous in history for its rise and downfall.

Wolsey was the son of a respectable butcher at Ipswich, in Suffolk, and received so excellent an education that he became a tutor to the family of the Marquis of Dorset, who afterwards got him appointed one of the late King's chaplains. On the accession of Henry the Eighth, he was promoted and taken into great favour. He was now Archbishop of York; the Pope had made him a Cardinal besides; and whoever wanted influence in England or favour with the King—whether he were a foreign monarch or an English nobleman—was obliged to make a friend of the great Cardinal Wolsey.

He was a gay man, who could dance and jest, and sing and drink; and those were the roads to so much, or rather so little, of a heart as King Henry had. He was wonderfully fond of pomp and glitter, and so was the King. He knew a good deal of the Church learning of that time; much of which consisted in finding artful excuses and pretences for almost any wrong thing, and in arguing that black was white, or any other colour. This kind of learning pleased the King too. For many such reasons, the Cardinal was high in estimation with the King; and, being a man of far greater ability,

knew as well how to manage him, as a clever keeper may know how to manage a wolf or a tiger, or any other cruel and uncertain beast, that may turn upon him and tear him any day. Never had there been seen in England such state as my Lord Cardinal kept. His wealth was enormous; equal, it was reckoned, to the riches of the Crown. His palaces were as splendid as the King's, and his retinue was eight hundred strong. He held his Court, dressed out from top to toe in flaming scarlet; and his very shoes were golden, set with precious stones. His followers rode on blood horses; while he, with a wonderful affectation of humility in the midst of his great splendour, ambled on a mule with a red velvet saddle and bridle and golden stirrups.

Through the influence of this stately priest, a grand meeting was arranged to take place between the French and English Kings in France; but on ground belonging to England. A prodigious show of friendship and rejoicing was to be made on the occasion; and heralds were sent to proclaim with brazen trumpets through all the principal cities of Europe, that, on a certain day, the Kings of France and England, as companions and brothers in arms, each attended by eighteen followers, would hold a tournament against all knights who might choose to come.

CHARLES, the new Emperor of Germany (the old one being dead), wanted to prevent too cordial an alliance between these sovereigns, and came over to England before the King could repair to the place of meeting; and, besides making an agreeable impression upon him, secured Wolsey's interest by promising that his influence should make him Pope when the next vacancy occurred. On the day when the Emperor left England, the King and all the Court went over to Calais, and thence to the place of meeting, between Ardres and Guisnes, commonly called the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Here, all manner of expense and prodigality was lavished on the decorations of the show; many of the knights and gentlemen being so superbly dressed that it was said they carried their whole estates upon their shoulders.

There were sham castles, temporary chapels, fountains running wine, great cellars full of wine free as water to all comers, silk tents, gold lace and foil, gilt lions, and such things without end; and, in the midst of all, the rich Cardinal outshone and out-glittered all the noblemen and gentlemen assembled. After a treaty made between the two Kings with as much solemnity as if they had intended to keep it, the lists—nine hundred feet long, and three hundred and

twenty broad—were opened for the tournament ; the Queens of France and England looking on with great array of lords and ladies. Then, for ten days, the two sovereigns fought five combats every day, and always beat their polite adversaries ; though they *do* write that the King of England, being thrown in a wrestle one day by the King of France, lost his kingly temper with his brother in arms, and wanted to make a quarrel of it. Then, there is a great story belonging to this Field of the Cloth of Gold, showing how the English were distrustful of the French, and the French of the English, until Francis rode alone one morning to Henry's tent ; and, going in before he was out of bed, told him in joke that he was his prisoner ; and how Henry jumped out of bed and embraced Francis ; and how Francis helped Henry to dress, and warmed his linen for him ; and how Henry gave Francis a splendid jewelled collar, and how Francis gave Henry, in return, a costly bracelet. All this and a great deal more was so written about, and sung about, and talked about at that time (and, indeed, since that time too), that the world has had good cause to be sick of it, for ever.

Of course, nothing came of all these fine doings but a speedy renewal of the war between England and France, in which the two Royal companions and brothers in arms longed very earnestly to damage one another. But, before it broke out again, the Duke of Buckingham was shamefully executed on Tower Hill, on the evidence of a discharged servant—really for nothing, except the folly of having believed in a friar of the name of HOPKINS, who had pretended to be a prophet, and who had mumbled and jumbled out some nonsense about the Duke's son being destined to be very great in the land. It was believed that the unfortunate Duke had given offence to the great Cardinal by expressing his mind freely about the expense and absurdity of the whole business of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. At any rate, he was beheaded, as I have said, for nothing. And the people who saw it done were very angry, and cried out that it was the work of "the butcher's son !"

The new war was a short one, though the Earl of Surrey invaded France again, and did some injury to that country. It ended in another treaty of peace between the two kingdoms, and in the discovery that the Emperor of Germany was not such a good friend to England in reality, as he pretended to be. Neither did he keep his promise to Wolsey to make him Pope, though the King urged him. Two Popes died in pretty quick succession ; but the foreign priests were

too much for the Cardinal, and kept him out of the post. So the Cardinal and King together found out that the Emperor of Germany was not a man to keep faith with ; broke off a projected marriage between the King's daughter MARY, Princess of Wales, and that sovereign ; and began to consider whether it might not be well to marry the young lady, either to Francis himself, or to his eldest son.

There now arose at Wittemberg, in Germany, the great leader of the mighty change in England which is called the Reformation, and which set the people free from their slavery to the priests. This was a learned Doctor, named MARTIN LUTHER, who knew all about them, for he had been a priest, and even a monk, himself. The preaching and writing of Wickliffe had set a number of men thinking on this subject ; and Luther, finding one day to his great surprise, that there really was a book called the New Testament which the priests did not allow to be read, and which contained truths that they suppressed, began to be very vigorous against the whole body, from the Pope downward. It happened, while he was yet only beginning his vast work of awakening the nation, that an impudent fellow named TETZEL, a friar of very bad character, came into his neighbourhood selling what were called Indulgences, by wholesale, to raise money for beautifying the great Cathedral of St. Peter's, at Rome. Whoever bought an Indulgence of the Pope was supposed to buy himself off from the punishment of Heaven for his offences. Luther told the people that these Indulgences were worthless bits of paper, before God, and that Tetzel and his masters were a crew of impostors in selling them.

The King and the Cardinal were mightily indignant at this presumption ; and the King (with the help of SIR THOMAS MORE, a wise man, whom he afterwards repaid by striking off his head) even wrote a book about it, with which the Pope was so well pleased that he gave the King the title of Defender of the Faith. The King and the Cardinal also issued flaming warnings to the people not to read Luther's books, on pain of excommunication. But they did read them for all that ; and the rumour of what was in them spread far and wide.

When this great change was thus going on, the King began to show himself in his truest and worst colours. Anne Boleyn, the pretty little girl who had gone abroad to France with his sister, was by this time grown up to be very beautiful, and was one of the ladies in attendance on Queen Catherine. Now, Queen Cathe-

rine was no longer young or handsome, and it is likely that she was not particularly good-tempered; having been always rather melancholy, and having been made more so by the deaths of four of her children when they were very young. So, the King fell in love with the fair Anne Boleyn, and said to himself, "How can I be best rid of my own troublesome wife whom I am tired of, and marry Anne?"

You recollect that Queen Catherine had been the wife of Henry's brother. What does the King do, after thinking it over, but calls his favourite priests about him, and says, O! his mind is in such a dreadful state, and he is so frightfully uneasy, because he is afraid it was not lawful for him to marry the Queen! Not one of those priests had the courage to hint that it was rather curious he had never thought of that before, and that his mind seemed to have been in a tolerably jolly condition during a great many years, in which he certainly had not fretted himself thin; but, they all said, Ah! that was very true, and it was a serious business; and perhaps the best way to make it right, would be for his Majesty to be divorced! The King replied, Yes, he thought that would be the best way, certainly; so they all went to work.

If I were to relate to you the intrigues and plots that took place in the endeavour to get this divorce, you would think the History of England the most tiresome book in the world. So I shall say no more, than that after a vast deal of negotiation and evasion, the Pope issued a commission to Cardinal Wolsey and CARDINAL CAMPEGGIO (whom he sent over from Italy for the purpose), to try the whole case in England. It is supposed—and I think with reason—that Wolsey was the Queen's enemy, because she had reproved him for his proud and gorgeous manner of life. But, he did not at first know that the King wanted to marry Anne Boleyn; and when he did know it, he even went down on his knees, in the endeavour to dissuade him.

The Cardinals opened their court in the Convent of the Black Friars, near to where the bridge of that name in London now stands; and the King and Queen, that they might be near it, took up their lodgings at the adjoining palace of Bridewell, of which nothing now remains but a bad prison. On the opening of the court, when the King and Queen were called on to appear, that poor ill-used lady, with a dignity and firmness and yet with a womanly affection worthy to be always admired, went and kneeled at the King's feet, and said that she had come,

a stranger, to his dominions; that she had been a good and true wife to him for twenty years; and that she could acknowledge no power in those Cardinals to try whether she should be considered his wife after all that time, or should be put away. With that, she got up and left the court, and would never afterwards come back to it.

The King pretended to be very much overcome, and said, O! my lords and gentlemen, what a good woman she was to be sure, and how delighted he would be to live with her unto death, but for that terrible uneasiness in his mind which was quite wearing him away! So, the case went on, and there was nothing but talk for two months. Then Cardinal Campeggio, who, on behalf of the Pope, wanted nothing so much as delay, adjourned it for two more months; and before that time was elapsed, the Pope himself adjourned it indefinitely, by requiring the King and Queen to come to Rome and have it tried there. But by good luck for the King, word was brought to him by some of his people, that they had happened to meet at supper, THOMAS CRANMER, a learned Doctor of Cambridge, who had proposed to urge the Pope on, by referring the case to all the learned doctors and bishops, here and there and everywhere, and getting their opinions that the King's marriage was unlawful. The King, who was now in a hurry to marry Anne Boleyn, thought this such a good idea, that he sent for Cranmer, post haste, and said to LORD ROCHFORD, Anne Boleyn's father, "Take this learned Doctor down to your country-house, and there let him have a good room for a study, and no end of books out of which to prove that I may marry your daughter." Lord Rochfort, not at all reluctant, made the learned Doctor as comfortable as he could; and the learned Doctor went to work to prove his case. All this time, the King and Anne Boleyn were writing letters to one another almost daily, full of impatience to have the case settled; and Anne Boleyn was showing herself (as I think) very worthy of the fate which afterwards befell her.

It was bad for Cardinal Wolsey that he had left Cranmer to render this help. It was worse for him that he had tried to dissuade the King from marrying Anne Boleyn. Such a servant as he, to such a master as Henry, would probably have fallen in any case; but, between the hatred of the party of the Queen that was, and the hatred of the party of the Queen that was to be, he fell suddenly and heavily. Going down one day to the Court of Chancery, where he now presided, he was waited upon by the

Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, who told him that they brought an order to him to resign that office, and to withdraw quietly to a house he had at Esher, in Surrey. The Cardinal refusing, they rode off to the King; and next day came back with a letter from him, on reading which, the Cardinal submitted. An inventory was made out of all the riches in his palace at York Place (now Whitehall), and he went sorrowfully up the river, in his barge, to Putney. An abject man he was, in spite of his pride; for being overtaken, riding out of that place towards Esher, by one of the King's chamberlains who brought him a kind message and a ring, he alighted from his mule, took off his cap, and kneeled down in the dirt. His poor Fool, whom in his prosperous days he had always kept in his palace to entertain him, cut a far better figure than he; for, when the Cardinal said to the chamberlain that he had nothing to send to his lord the King as a present, but that jester who was a most excellent one, it took six strong yeomen to remove the faithful fool from his master.

The once proud Cardinal was soon further disgraced, and wrote the most abject letters to his vile sovereign; who humbled him one day and encouraged him the next, according to his humour, until he was at last ordered to go and reside in his diocese of York. He said he was too poor; but I don't know how he made that out, for he took a hundred and sixty servants with him, and seventy-two cart-loads of furniture, food, and wine. He remained in that part of the country for the best part of a year, and showed himself so improved by his misfortunes, and was so mild and so conciliating, that he won all hearts. And indeed, even in his proud days, he had done some magnificent things for learning and education. At last, he was arrested for high treason; and, coming slowly on his journey towards London, got as far as Leicester. Arriving at Leicester Abbey after dark, and very ill, he said—when the monks came out at the gate with lighted torches to receive him—that he had come to lay his bones among them. He had indeed; for he was taken to a bed, from which he never rose again. His last words were, "Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, He would not have given me over, in my grey hairs. Howbeit, this is my just reward for my pains and diligence, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince." The news of his death was quickly carried to the King, who was amusing himself with archery in the garden of the magnificent palace at Hampton Court, which that

very Wolsey had presented to him. The greatest emotion his royal mind displayed at the loss of a servant so faithful and so ruined, was a particular desire to lay hold of fifteen hundred pounds which the Cardinal was reported to have hidden somewhere.

The opinions concerning the divorce, of the learned doctors and bishops and others, being at last collected, and being generally in the King's favour, were forwarded to the Pope, with an entreaty that he would now grant it. The unfortunate Pope, who was a timid man, was half distracted between his fear of his authority being set aside in England if he did not do as he was asked, and his dread of offending the Emperor of Germany, who was Queen Catherine's nephew. In this state of mind he still evaded and did nothing. Then, THOMAS CROMWELL, who had been one of Wolsey's faithful attendants, and had remained so even in his decline, advised the King to take the matter into his own hands, and make himself the head of the whole Church. This, the King by various artful means, began to do; but he recompensed the clergy by allowing them to burn as many people as they pleased, for holding Luther's opinions. You must understand that Sir Thomas More, the wise man who had helped the King with his book, had been made Chancellor in Wolsey's place. But, as he was truly attached to the Church as it was even in its abuses, he, in this state of things, resigned.

Being now quite resolved to get rid of Queen Catherine, and to marry Anne Boleyn without more ado, the King made Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury, and directed Queen Catherine to leave the Court. She obeyed; but replied that wherever she went, she was Queen of England still, and would remain so, to the last. The King then married Anne Boleyn privately; and the new Archbishop of Canterbury, within half a year, declared his marriage with Queen Catherine void, and crowned Anne Boleyn Queen.

She might have known that no good could ever come from such wrong, and that the corpulent brute who had been so faithless and so cruel to his first wife, could be more faithless and more cruel to his second. She might have known that, even when he was in love with her, he had been a mean and selfish coward, running away, like a frightened cur, from her society and her house, when a dangerous sickness broke out in it, and when she might easily have taken it and died, as several of the household did. But, Anne Boleyn arrived at all this knowledge too late, and bought it at a dear price. Her bad

marriage with a worse man came to its natural end. Its natural end was not, as we shall too soon see, a natural death for her.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ENGLAND UNDER HENRY THE EIGHTH.

PART THE SECOND.

THE Pope was thrown into a very angry state of mind when he heard of the King's marriage, and fumed exceedingly. Many of the English monks and friars, seeing that their order was in danger, did the same; some even declaimed against the King in church before his face, and were not to be stopped until he himself roared out "Silence!" The King, not much the worse for this, took it pretty quietly; and was very glad when his Queen gave birth to a daughter, who was christened ELIZABETH, and declared Princess of Wales as her sister Mary had already been.

One of the most atrocious features of this reign was that Henry the Eighth was always trimming between the reformed religion and the unreformed one; so that the more he quarrelled with the Pope, the more of his own subjects he roasted alive for not holding the Pope's opinions. Thus, an unfortunate student named John Frith, and a poor simple tailor named Andrew Hewet who loved him very much, and said that whatever John Frith believed *he* believed, were burnt in Smithfield—to show what a capital Christian the King was.

But, these were speedily followed by two much greater victims, Sir Thomas More, and John Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester. The latter, who was a good and amiable old man, had committed no greater offence than believing in Elizabeth Barton, called the Maid of Kent—another of those ridiculous women who pretended to be inspired, and to make all sorts of heavenly revelations, though they indeed uttered nothing but evil nonsense. For this offence—as it was pretended, but really for denying the King to be the supreme Head of the Church—he got into trouble, and was put in prison; but, even then, he might have been suffered to die naturally (short work having been made of executing the Kentish Maid and her principal followers), but that the Pope, to spite the King, resolved to make him a cardinal. Upon that the King made a ferocious joke to the effect that

the Pope might send Fisher a red hat—which is the way they make a cardinal—but he should have no head on which to wear it; and he was tried with all unfairness and injustice, and sentenced to death. He died like a noble and virtuous old man, and left a worthy name behind him. The King supposed, I dare say, that Sir Thomas More would be frightened by this example; but, as he was not to be easily terrified, and, thoroughly believing in the Pope, had made up his mind that the King was not the rightful Head of the Church, he positively refused to say that he was. For this crime he too was tried and sentenced, after having been in prison a whole year. When he was doomed to death, and came away from his trial with the edge of the executioner's axe turned towards him—as was always done in those times when a state prisoner came to that hopeless pass—he bore it quite serenely, and gave his blessing to his son, who pressed through the crowd in Westminster Hall and kneeled down to receive it. But, when he got to the Tower Wharf on his way back to his prison, and his favourite daughter, MARGARET ROPER, a very good woman, rushed through the guards again and again, to kiss him and to weep upon his neck, he was overcome at last. He soon recovered, and never more showed any feeling but cheerfulness and courage. When he was going up the steps of the scaffold to his death, he said jokingly to the Lieutenant of the Tower, observing that they were weak and shook beneath his tread, "I pray you, master Lieutenant, see me safe up; and, for my coming down, I can shift for myself." Also he said to the executioner, after he had laid his head upon the block, "Let me put my beard out of the way; for that, at least, has never committed any treason." Then his head was struck off at a blow. These two executions were worthy of King Henry the Eighth. Sir Thomas More was one of the most virtuous men in his dominions, and the Bishop was one of his oldest and truest friends. But to be a friend of that fellow was almost as dangerous as to be his wife.

When the news of these two murders got to Rome, the Pope raged against the murderer more than ever Pope raged since the world began, and prepared a Bull, ordering his subjects to take arms against him and dethrone him. The King took all possible precautions to keep that document out of his dominions, and set to work in return to suppress a great number of the English monasteries and abbeys.

This destruction was begun by a body of commissioners, of whom Cromwell (whom the

King had taken into great favour) was the head ; and was carried on through some few years to its entire completion. There is no doubt that many of these religious establishments were religious in nothing but in name, and were crammed with lazy, indolent, and sensual monks. There is no doubt that they imposed upon the people in every possible way ; that they had images moved by wires, which they pretended were miraculously moved by Heaven ; that they had among them a whole tun measure full of teeth, all purporting to have come out of the head of one saint, who must indeed have been a very extraordinary person with that enormous allowance of grinders ; that they had bits of coal which they said had fried Saint Lawrence, and bits of toe-nails which they said belonged to other famous saints ; penknives, and boots, and girdles, which they said belonged to others ; and that all these bits of rubbish were called Relics, and adored by the ignorant people. But, on the other hand, there is no doubt either, that the King's officers and men punished the good monks with the bad ; did great injustice ; demolished many beautiful things and many valuable libraries ; destroyed numbers of paintings, stained glass windows, fine pavements, and carvings ; and that the whole court were ravenously greedy and rapacious for the division of this great spoil among them. The King seems to have grown almost mad in the ardour of this pursuit ; for he declared Thomas à Becket a traitor, though he had been dead so many years, and had his body dug up out of his grave. He must have been as miraculous as the monks pretended, if they had told the truth, for he was found with one head on his shoulders, and they had shown another as his undoubted and genuine head ever since his death ; it had brought them vast sums of money, too. The gold and jewels on his shrine filled two great chests, and eight men tottered as they carried them away. How rich the monasteries were you may infer from the fact that, when they were all suppressed, one hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year—in those days an immense sum—came to the Crown.

These things were not done without causing great discontent among the people. The monks had been good landlords and hospitable entertainers of all travellers, and had been accustomed to give away a great deal of corn, and fruit, and meat, and other things. In those days it was difficult to change goods into money, in consequence of the roads being very few and very bad, and the carts and waggons of the worst description ; and they must either have

given away some of the good things they possessed in enormous quantities, or have suffered them to spoil and moulder. So, many of the people missed what it was more agreeable to get idly than to work for ; and the monks who were driven out of their homes and wandered about encouraged their discontent ; and there were, consequently, great risings in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. These were put down by terrific executions, from which the monks themselves did not escape, and the King went on grunting and growling in his own fat way, like a Royal pig.

I have told all this story of the religious houses at one time, to make it plainer, and to get back to the King's domestic affairs.

The unfortunate Queen Catherine was by this time dead ; and the King was by this time as tired of his second Queen as he had been of his first. As he had fallen in love with Anne when she was in the service of Catherine, so he now fell in love with another lady in the service of Anne. See how wicked deeds are punished, and how bitterly and self-reproachfully the Queen must now have thought of her own rise to the throne ! The new fancy was a *LADY JANE SEYMOUR* ; and the King no sooner set his mind on her, than he resolved to have Anne Boleyn's head. So, he brought a number of charges against Anne, accusing her of dreadful crimes which she had never committed, and implicating in them her own brother and certain gentlemen in her service : among whom one Norris, and Mark Smeaton a musician, are best remembered. As the lords and councillors were as afraid of the King and as subservient to him as the meanest peasant in England was, they brought in Anne Boleyn guilty, and the other unfortunate persons accused with her, guilty too. Those gentlemen died like men, with the exception of Smeaton, who had been tempted by the King into telling lies, which he called confessions, and who had expected to be pardoned ; but who, I am very glad to say, was not. There was then only the Queen to dispose of. She had been surrounded in the Tower with women spies ; had been monstrously persecuted and foully slandered ; and had received no justice. But her spirit rose with her afflictions ; and, after having in vain tried to soften the King by writing an affecting letter to him which still exists, "from her doleful prison in the Tower," she resigned herself to death. She said to those about her, very cheerfully, that she had heard say the executioner was a good one, and that she had a little neck (she laughed and clasped it with her hands as she said that), and would soon be out of her pain.

And she *was* soon out of her pain, poor creature, on the Green inside the Tower, and her body was flung into an old box and put away in the ground under the chapel.

There is a story that the King sat in his palace listening very anxiously for the sound of the cannon which was to announce this new murder; and that, when he heard it come booming on the air, he rose up in great spirits and ordered out his dogs to go a-hunting. He was bad enough to do it; but whether he did it or not, it is certain that he married Jane Seymour the very next day.

I have not much pleasure in recording that she lived just long enough to give birth to a son who was christened EDWARD, and then to die of a fever: for, I cannot but think that any woman who married such a ruffian, and knew what innocent blood was on his hands, deserved the axe that would assuredly have fallen on the neck of Jane Seymour, if she had lived much longer.

Cranmer had done what he could to save some of the Church property for purposes of religion and education; but, the great families had been so hungry to get hold of it, that very little could be rescued for such objects. Even MILES COVERDALE, who did the people the inestimable service of translating the Bible into English (which the unreformed religion never permitted to be done), was left in poverty while the great families clutched the Church lands and money. The people had been told that when the Crown came into possession of these funds, it would not be necessary to tax them; but they were taxed afresh directly afterwards. It was fortunate for them, indeed, that so many nobles were so greedy for this wealth; since, if it had remained with the Crown, there might have been no end to tyranny for hundreds of years. One of the most active writers on the Church's side against the King was a member of his own family—a sort of distant cousin, REGINALD POLE by name—who attacked him in the most violent manner (though he received a pension from him all the time), and fought for the Church with his pen, day and night. As he was beyond the King's reach—being in Italy—the King politely invited him over to discuss the subject; but he, knowing better than to come, and wisely staying where he was, the King's rage fell upon his brother Lord Montague, the Marquis of Exeter, and some other gentlemen: who were tried for high treason in corresponding with him and aiding him—which they probably did—and were all executed. The Pope made Reginald Pole a cardinal; but, so

much against his will, that it is thought he even aspired in his own mind to the vacant throne of England, and had hopes of marrying the Princess Mary. His being made a high priest, however, put an end to all that. His mother, the venerable Countess of Salisbury—who was, unfortunately for herself, within the tyrant's reach—was the last of his relatives on whom his wrath fell. When she was told to lay her grey head upon the block, she answered the executioner, "No! My head never committed treason, and if you want it, you shall seize it." So, she ran round and round the scaffold with the executioner striking at her, and her grey hair bedabbled with blood; and even when they held her down upon the block she moved her head about to the last, resolved to be no party to her own barbarous murder. All this the people bore, as they had borne everything else.

Indeed they bore much more; for the slow fires of Smithfield were continually burning, and people were constantly being roasted to death—still to show what a good Christian the King was. He defied the Pope and his Bull, which was now issued, and had come into England; but he burned innumerable people whose only offence was that they differed from the Pope's religious opinions. There was a wretched man named LAMBERT, among others, who was tried for this before the King, and with whom six bishops argued one after another. When he was quite exhausted (as well he might be, after six bishops), he threw himself on the King's mercy; but the King blustered out that he had no mercy for heretics. So, *he* too fed the fire.

All this the people bore, and more than all this yet. The national spirit seems to have been banished from the kingdom at this time. The very people who were executed for treason, the very wives and friends of the "bluff" King, spoke of him on the scaffold as a good prince, and a gentle prince—just as serfs in similar circumstances have been known to do, under the Sultans and Bashaws of the East, or under the fierce old tyrants of Russia, who poured boiling and freezing water on them alternately, until they died. The Parliament were as bad as the rest, and gave the King whatever he wanted; among other vile accommodations, they gave him new powers of murdering, at his will and pleasure, any one whom he might choose to call a traitor. But the worst measure they passed was an Act of Six Articles, commonly called at the time "the whip with six strings;" which punished offences against the Pope's opinions, without mercy, and enforced the very worst parts of the monkish religion.

Cranmer would have modified it, if he could ; but, being overborne by the Romish party, had not the power. As one of the articles declared that the priests should not marry, and as he was married himself, he sent his wife and children into Germany, and began to tremble at his danger ; none the less because he was, and had long been, the King's friend. This whip of six strings was made under the King's own eye. It should never be forgotten of him how cruelly he supported the worst of the Popish doctrines when there was nothing to be got by opposing them.

This amiable monarch now thought of taking another wife. He proposed to the French King to have some of the ladies of the French Court exhibited before him, that he might make his Royal choice ; but the French King answered that he would rather not have his ladies trotted out to be shown like horses at a fair. He proposed to the Duchess Dowager of Milan, who replied that she might have thought of such a match if she had had two heads ; but, that only owning one, she must beg to keep it safe. At last Cromwell represented that there was a Protestant Princess in Germany—those who held the reformed religion were called Protestants, because their leaders had Protested against the abuses and impositions of the unreformed Church—named ANNE OF CLEVES, who was beautiful, and would answer the purpose admirably. The King said was she a large woman, because he must have a fat wife ? “ O yes,” said Cromwell ; “ she was very large, just the thing.” On hearing this the King sent over his famous painter, Hans Holbein, to take her portrait. Hans made her out to be so good-looking that the King was satisfied, and the marriage was arranged. But, whether anybody had paid Hans to touch up the picture ; or whether Hans, like one or two other painters, flattered a princess in the ordinary way of business, I cannot say : all I know is, that when Anne came over and the King went to Rochester to meet her, and first saw her without her seeing him, he swore she was “ a great Flanders mare,” and said he would never marry her. Being obliged to do it now matters had gone so far, he would not give her the presents he had prepared, and would never notice her. He never forgave Cromwell his part in the affair. His downfall dates from that time.

It was quickened by his enemies, in the interests of the unreformed religion, putting in the King's way, at a state dinner, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, CATHERINE HOWARD, a young lady of fascinating manners, though small in

stature and not particularly beautiful. Falling in love with her on the spot, the King soon divorced Anne of Cleves after making her the subject of much brutal talk, on pretence that she had been previously betrothed to some one else—which would never do for one of his dignity—and married Catherine. It is probable that on his wedding-day, of all days in the year, he sent his faithful Cromwell to the scaffold, and had his head struck off. He further celebrated the occasion by burning at one time, and causing to be drawn to the fire on the same hurdles, some Protestant prisoners for denying the Pope's doctrines, and some Roman Catholic prisoners for denying his own supremacy. Still the people bore it, and not a gentleman in England raised his hand.

But, by a just retribution, it soon came out that Catherine Howard, before her marriage, had been really guilty of such crimes as the King had falsely attributed to his second wife Anne Boleyn ; so, again the dreadful axe made the King a widower, and this Queen passed away as so many in that reign had passed away before her. As an appropriate pursuit under the circumstances, Henry then applied himself to superintending the composition of a religious book called “ A necessary doctrine for any Christian Man.” He must have been a little confused in his mind, I think, at about this period ; for he was so false to himself as to be true to some one : that some one being Cranmer, whom the Duke of Norfolk and others of his enemies tried to ruin ; but to whom the King was steadfast, and to whom he one night gave his ring, charging him when he should find himself, next day, accused of treason, to show it to the council board. This Cranmer did to the confusion of his enemies. I suppose the King thought he might want him a little longer.

He married yet once more. Yes, strange to say, he found in England another woman who would become his wife, and she was CATHERINE PARR, widow of Lord Latimer. She leaned towards the reformed religion ; and it is some comfort to know, that she tormented the King considerably by arguing a variety of doctrinal points with him on all possible occasions. She had very nearly done this to her own destruction. After one of these conversations the King in a very black mood actually instructed GARDINER, one of his Bishops who favoured the Popish opinions, to draw a bill of accusation against her, which would have inevitably brought her to the scaffold where her predecessors had died, but that one of her friends picked up the paper of instructions which had been dropped

in the palace, and gave her timely notice. She fell ill with terror; but managed the King so well when he came to entrap her into further statements—by saying that she had only spoken on such points to divert his mind and to get some information from his extraordinary wisdom—that he gave her a kiss and called her his sweetheart. And, when the Chancellor came next day actually to take her to the Tower, the King sent him about his business, and honoured him with the epithets of a beast, a knave, and a fool. So near was Catherine Parr to the block, and so narrow was her escape!

There was war with Scotland in this reign, and a short clumsy war with France for favouring Scotland; but, the events at home were so dreadful, and leave such an enduring stain on the country, that I need say no more of what happened abroad.

A few more horrors, and this reign is over. There was a lady, ANNE ASKEW, in Lincolnshire, who inclined to the Protestant opinions, and whose husband being a fierce Catholic, turned her out of his house. She came to London, and was considered as offending against the six articles, and was taken to the Tower, and put upon the rack—probably because it was hoped that she might, in her agony, criminate some obnoxious persons; if falsely, so much the better. She was tortured without uttering a cry, until the Lieutenant of the Tower would suffer his men to torture her no more; and then two priests who were present actually pulled off their robes, and turned the wheels of the rack with their own hands, so rending and twisting and breaking her that she was afterwards carried to the fire in a chair. She was burned with three others, a gentleman, a clergyman, and a tailor; and so the world went on.

Either the King became afraid of the power of the Duke of Norfolk, and his son the Earl of Surrey, or they gave him some offence, but he resolved to pull *them* down, to follow all the rest who were gone. The son was tried first—of course for nothing—and defended himself bravely; but of course he was found guilty, and of course he was executed. Then his father was laid hold of, and left for death too.

But the King himself was left for death by a Greater King, and the earth was to be rid of him at last. He was now a swollen, hideous spectacle, with a great hole in his leg, and so odious to every sense that it was dreadful to approach him. When he was found to be dying, Cranmer was sent for from his palace at Croydon, and came with all speed, but found him speechless. Happily, in that hour he perished.

He was in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign.

Henry the Eighth has been favoured by some Protestant writers, because the Reformation was achieved in his time. But the mighty merit of it lies with other men and not with him; and it can be rendered none the worse by this monster's crimes, and none the better by any defence of them. The plain truth is, that he was a most intolerable ruffian, a disgrace to human nature, and a blot of blood and grease upon the History of England.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD THE SIXTH.

HENRY THE EIGHTH had made a will, appointing a council of sixteen to govern the kingdom for his son while he was under age (he was, now only ten years old), and another council of twelve to help them. The most powerful of the first council was the EARL OF HERTFORD, the young King's uncle, who lost no time in bringing his nephew with great state up to Enfield, and thence to the Tower. It was considered at the time a striking proof of virtue in the young King that he was sorry for his father's death; but, as common subjects have that virtue too, sometimes, we will say no more about it.

There was a curious part of the late King's will, requiring his executors to fulfil whatever promises he had made. Some of the court wondering what these might be, the Earl of Hertford and the other noblemen interested, said that they were promises to advance and enrich *them*. So, the Earl of Hertford made himself DUKE OF SOMERSET, and made his brother EDWARD SEYMOUR a baron; and there were various similar promotions, all very agreeable to the parties concerned, and very dutiful, no doubt, to the late King's memory. To be more dutiful still, they made themselves rich out of the Church lands, and were very comfortable. The new Duke of Somerset caused himself to be declared PROTECTOR of the kingdom, and was, indeed, the King.

As young Edward the Sixth had been brought up in the principles of the Protestant religion, everybody knew that they would be maintained. But Cranmer, to whom they were chiefly entrusted, advanced them steadily and temperately. Many superstitious and ridiculous prac-

tices were stopped; but practices which were harmless were not interfered with.

The Duke of Somerset, the Protector, was anxious to have the young King engaged in marriage to the young Queen of Scotland, in order to prevent that princess from making an alliance with any foreign power; but, as a large party in Scotland were unfavourable to this plan, he invaded that country. His excuse for doing so was, that the Border men—that is, the Scotch who lived in that part of the country where England and Scotland joined—troubled the English very much. But there were two sides to this question; for the English Border men troubled the Scotch too; and, through many long years, there were perpetual border quarrels which gave rise to numbers of old tales and songs. However, the Protector invaded Scotland; and ARRAN, the Scottish Regent, with an army twice as large as his, advanced to meet him. They encountered on the banks of the river Esk, within a few miles of Edinburgh; and there, after a little skirmish, the Protector made such moderate proposals, in offering to retire if the Scotch would only engage not to marry their princess to any foreign prince, that the Regent thought the English were afraid. But in this he made a horrible mistake; for the English soldiers on land, and the English sailors on the water, so set upon the Scotch, that they broke and fled, and more than ten thousand of them were killed. It was a dreadful battle, for the fugitives were slain without mercy. The ground for four miles, all the way to Edinburgh, was strewn with dead men, and with arms, and legs, and heads. Some hid themselves in streams and were drowned; some threw away their armour and were killed running, almost naked; but in this battle of Pinkey the English lost only two or three hundred men. They were much better clothed than the Scotch; at the poverty of whose appearance and country they were exceedingly astonished.

A Parliament was called when Somerset came back, and it repealed the whip with six strings, and did one or two other good things; though it unhappily retained the punishment of burning for those people who did not make believe to believe, in all religious matters, what the Government had declared that they must and should believe. It also made a foolish law (meant to put down beggars), that any man who lived idly and loitered about for three days together, should be burned with a hot iron, made a slave, and wear an iron fetter. But this savage absurdity soon came to an end, and went the way of a great many other foolish laws.

The Protector was now so proud that he sat in Parliament before all the nobles, on the right hand of the throne. Many other noblemen, who only wanted to be as proud if they could get a chance, became his enemies of course; and it is supposed that he came back suddenly from Scotland because he had received news that his brother, LORD SEYMOUR, was becoming dangerous to him. This lord was now High Admiral of England; a very handsome man, and a great favourite with the Court ladies—even with the young Princess Elizabeth, who romped with him a little more than young princesses in these times do with any one. He had married Catherine Parr, the late King's widow, who was now dead; and, to strengthen his power, he secretly supplied the young King with money. He may even have engaged with some of his brother's enemies in a plot to carry the boy off. On these and other accusations, at any rate, he was confined in the Tower, impeached, and found guilty; his own brother's name being—unnatural and sad to tell—the first signed to the warrant for his execution. He was executed on Tower Hill, and died denying his treason. One of his last proceedings in this world was to write two letters, one to the Princess Elizabeth, and one to the Princess Mary, which a servant of his took charge of, and concealed in his shoe. These letters are supposed to have urged them against his brother, and to revenge his death. What they truly contained is not known; but there is no doubt that he had, at one time, obtained great influence over the Princess Elizabeth.

All this while, the Protestant religion was making progress. The images which the people had gradually come to worship, were removed from the churches; the people were informed that they need not confess themselves to priests unless they chose; a common prayer-book was drawn up in the English language, which all could understand; and many other improvements were made; still moderately. For Cranmer was a very moderate man, and even restrained the Protestant clergy from violently abusing the unreformed religion—as they very often did, and which was not a good example. But the people were at this time in great distress. The rapacious nobility who had come into possession of the Church lands, were very bad landlords. They enclosed great quantities of ground for the feeding of sheep, which was then more profitable than the growing of crops; and this increased the general distress. So the people, who still understood little of what was going on about them, and still readily believed

what the homeless monks told them—many of whom had been their good friends in their better days—took it into their heads that all this was owing to the reformed religion, and therefore rose in many parts of the country.

The most powerful risings were in Devonshire and Norfolk. In Devonshire, the rebellion was so strong that ten thousand men united within a few days, and even laid siege to Exeter. But LORD RUSSELL, coming to the assistance of the citizens who defended that town, defeated the rebels; and, not only hanged the Mayor of one place, but hanged the vicar of another from his own church steeple. What with hanging and killing by the sword, four thousand of the rebels are supposed to have fallen in that one county. In Norfolk (where the rising was more against the enclosure of open lands than against the reformed religion), the popular leader was a man named ROBERT KET, a tanner of Wymondham. The mob were, in the first instance, excited against the tanner by one JOHN FLOWERDEW, a gentleman who owed him a grudge: but the tanner was more than a match for the gentleman, since he soon got the people on his side, and established himself near Norwich with quite an army. There was a large oak-tree in that place, on a spot called Mousehold Hill, which Ket named the Tree of Reformation; and under its green boughs, he and his men sat, in the midsummer weather, holding courts of justice, and debating affairs of state. They were even impartial enough to allow some rather tiresome public speakers to get up into this Tree of Reformation, and point out their errors to them, in long discourses, while they lay listening (not always without some grumbling and growling), in the shade below. At last, one sunny July day, a herald appeared below the tree, and proclaimed Ket and all his men traitors, unless from that moment they dispersed and went home: in which case they were to receive a pardon. But, Ket and his men made light of the herald and became stronger than ever, until the Earl of Warwick went after them with a sufficient force, and cut them all to pieces. A few were hanged, drawn, and quartered, as traitors, and their limbs were sent into various country places to be a terror to the people. Nine of them were hanged upon nine green branches of the Oak of Reformation; and so, for the time, that tree may be said to have withered away.

The Protector, though a haughty man, had compassion for the real distresses of the common people, and a sincere desire to help them. But he was too proud and too high in degree to

hold even their favour steadily; and many of the nobles always envied and hated him, because they were as proud and not as high as he. He was at this time building a great Palace in the Strand: to get the stone for which he blew up church steeples with gunpowder, and pulled down bishops' houses: thus making himself still more disliked. At length, his principal enemy, the Earl of Warwick—Dudley by name, and the son of that Dudley who had made himself so odious with Empson, in the reign of Henry the Seventh—joined with seven other members of the Council against him, formed a separate Council; and, becoming stronger in a few days, sent him to the Tower under twenty-nine articles of accusation. After being sentenced by the Council to the forfeiture of all his offices and lands, he was liberated and pardoned, on making a very humble submission. He was even taken back into the Council again, after having suffered this fall, and married his daughter, LADY ANNE SEYMOUR, to Warwick's eldest son. But such a reconciliation was little likely to last, and did not outlive a year. Warwick, having got himself made Duke of Northumberland, and having advanced the more important of his friends, then finished the history by causing the Duke of Somerset and his friend LORD GREY, and others, to be arrested for treason, in having conspired to seize and dethrone the King. They were also accused of having intended to seize the new Duke of Northumberland, with his friends LORD NORTHAMPTON and LORD PEMBROKE; to murder them if they found need; and to raise the City to revolt. All this the fallen Protector positively denied; except that he confessed to having spoken of the murder of those three noblemen, but having never designed it. He was acquitted of the charge of treason, and found guilty of the other charges; so when the people—who remembered his having been their friend, now that he was disgraced and in danger, saw him come out from his trial with the axe turned from him—they thought he was altogether acquitted, and set up a loud shout of joy.

But the Duke of Somerset was ordered to be beheaded on Tower Hill, at eight o'clock in the morning, and proclamations were issued bidding the citizens keep at home until after ten. They filled the streets, however, and crowded the place of execution as soon as it was light; and, with sad faces and sad hearts, saw the once powerful Protector ascend the scaffold to lay his head upon the dreadful block. While he was yet saying his last words to them with manly courage, and telling them, in particular, how it

comforted him, at that pass, to have assisted in reforming the national religion, a member of the Council was seen riding up on horseback. They again thought that the Duke was saved by his bringing a reprieve, and again shouted for joy. But the Duke himself told them they were mistaken, and laid down his head and had it struck off at a blow.

Many of the bystanders rushed forward and steeped their handkerchiefs in his blood, as a mark of their affection. He had, indeed, been capable of many good acts, and one of them was discovered after he was no more. The Bishop of Durham, a very good man, had been informed against to the Council, when the Duke was in power, as having answered a treacherous letter proposing a rebellion against the reformed religion. As the answer could not be found, he could not be declared guilty; but it was now discovered, hidden by the Duke himself among some private papers, in his regard for that good man. The Bishop lost his office, and was deprived of his possessions.

It is not very pleasant to know that while his uncle lay in prison under sentence of death, the young King was being vastly entertained by plays, and dances, and sham fights: but there is no doubt of it, for he kept a journal himself. It is pleasanter to know that not a single Roman Catholic was burnt in this reign for holding that religion; though two wretched victims suffered for heresy. One, a woman named JOAN BOCHER, for professing some opinions that even she could only explain in unintelligible jargon. The other, a Dutchman, named VON PARIS, who practised as a surgeon in London. Edward was, to his credit, exceedingly unwilling to sign the warrant for the woman's execution: shedding tears before he did so, and telling Cranmer, who urged him to do it (though Cranmer really would have spared the woman at first, but for her own determined obstinacy), that the guilt was not his, but that of the man who so strongly urged the dreadful act. We shall see, too soon, whether the time ever came when Cranmer is likely to have remembered this with sorrow and remorse.

Cranmer and RIDLEY (at first Bishop of Rochester, and afterwards Bishop of London) were the most powerful of the clergy of this reign. Others were imprisoned and deprived of their property for still adhering to the unreformed religion; the most important among whom were GARDINER Bishop of Winchester, HEATH Bishop of Worcester, DAY Bishop of Chichester, and BONNER that Bishop of London who was superseded by Ridley. The Princess Mary, who inherited her mother's gloomy temper, and

hated the reformed religion as connected with her mother's wrongs and sorrows—she knew nothing else about it, always refusing to read a single book in which it was truly described—held by the unreformed religion too, and was the only person in the kingdom for whom the old Mass was allowed to be performed; nor would the young King have made that exception even in her favour, but for the strong persuasions of Cranmer and Ridley. He always viewed it with horror; and when he fell into a sickly condition, after having been very ill, first of the measles and then of the small-pox, he was greatly troubled in mind to think that if he died, and she, the next heir to the throne, succeeded, the Roman Catholic religion would be set up again.

This uneasiness, the Duke of Northumberland was not slow to encourage: for, if the Princess Mary came to the throne, he, who had taken part with the Protestants, was sure to be disgraced. Now, the Duchess of Suffolk was descended from King Henry the Seventh; and, if she resigned what little or no right she had, in favour of her daughter LADY JANE GREY, that would be the succession to promote the Duke's greatness; because LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, one of his sons, was, at this very time, newly married to her. So, he worked upon the King's fears, and persuaded him to set aside both the Princess Mary and the Princess Elizabeth, and assert his right to appoint his successor. Accordingly the young King handed to the Crown lawyers a writing signed half a dozen times over by himself, appointing Lady Jane Grey to succeed to the Crown, and requiring them to have his will made out according to law. They were much against it at first, and told the King so; but the Duke of Northumberland—being so violent about it that the lawyers even expected him to beat them, and hotly declaring that, stripped to his shirt, he would fight any man in such a quarrel—they yielded. Cranmer, also, at first hesitated; pleading that he had sworn to maintain the succession of the Crown to the Princess Mary; but, he was a weak man in his resolutions, and afterwards signed the document with the rest of the council.

It was completed none too soon; for Edward was now sinking in a rapid decline; and, by way of making him better, they handed him over to a woman-doctor who pretended to be able to cure it. He speedily got worse. On the sixth of July, in the year one thousand five hundred and fifty-three, he died, very peaceably and piously, praying God, with his last breath, to protect the reformed religion.

This King died in the sixteenth year of his age, and in the seventh of his reign. It is difficult to judge what the character of one so young might afterwards have become among so many bad, ambitious, quarrelling nobles. But, he was an amiable boy, of very good abilities, and had nothing coarse or cruel or brutal in his disposition—which in the son of such a father is rather surprising.

CHAPTER XXX.

ENGLAND UNDER MARY.

THE Duke of Northumberland was very anxious to keep the young King's death a secret, in order that he might get the two Princesses into his power. But, the Princess Mary, being informed of that event as she was on her way to London to see her sick brother, turned her horse's head, and rode away into Norfolk. The Earl of Arundel was her friend, and it was he who sent her warning of what had happened.

As the secret could not be kept, the Duke of Northumberland and the council sent for the Lord Mayor of London and some of the aldermen, and made a merit of telling it to them. Then, they made it known to the people, and set off to inform Lady Jane Grey that she was to be Queen.

She was a pretty girl of only sixteen, and was amiable, learned, and clever. When the lords who came to her, fell on their knees before her, and told her what tidings they brought, she was so astonished that she fainted. On recovering, she expressed her sorrow for the young King's death, and said that she knew she was unfit to govern the kingdom; but that if she must be Queen, she prayed God to direct her. She was then at Sion House, near Brentford; and the lords took her down the river in state to the Tower, that she might remain there (as the custom was) until she was crowned. But the people were not at all favourable to Lady Jane, considering that the right to be Queen was Mary's, and greatly disliking the Duke of Northumberland. They were not put into a better humour by the Duke's causing a vintner's servant, one Gabriel Pot, to be taken up for expressing his dissatisfaction among the crowd, and to have his ears nailed to the pillory, and cut off. Some powerful men among the nobility declared on Mary's side. They raised troops to support her cause, had her proclaimed Queen at

Norwich, and gathered around her at the castle of Framlingham, which belonged to the Duke of Norfolk. For, she was not considered so safe as yet, but that it was best to keep her in a castle on the sea-coast, from whence she might be sent abroad, if necessary.

The Council would have despatched Lady Jane's father, the Duke of Suffolk, as the general of the army against this force; but, as Lady Jane implored that her father might remain with her, and as he was known to be but a weak man, they told the Duke of Northumberland that he must take the command himself. He was not very ready to do so, as he mistrusted the Council much; but there was no help for it, and he set forth with a heavy heart, observing to a lord who rode beside him through Shoreditch at the head of the troops, that, although the people pressed in great numbers to look at them, they were terribly silent.

And his fears for himself turned out to be well founded. While he was waiting at Cambridge for further help from the Council, the Council took it into their heads to turn their backs on Lady Jane's cause, and to take up the Princess Mary's. This was chiefly owing to the before-mentioned Earl of Arundel, who represented to the Lord Mayor and aldermen, in a second interview with those sagacious persons, that, as for himself, he did not perceive the Reformed religion to be in much danger—which Lord Pembroke backed by flourishing his sword as another kind of persuasion. The Lord Mayor and aldermen, thus enlightened, said there could be no doubt that the Princess Mary ought to be Queen. So, she was proclaimed at the Cross by St. Paul's, and barrels of wine were given to the people, and they got very drunk, and danced round blazing bonfires—little thinking, poor wretches, what other bonfires would soon be blazing in Queen Mary's name.

After a ten days' dream of royalty, Lady Jane Grey resigned the Crown with great willingness, saying that she had only accepted it in obedience to her father and mother; and went gladly back to her pleasant house by the river, and her books. Mary then came on towards London; and at Wanstead in Essex, was joined by her half-sister, the Princess Elizabeth. They passed through the streets of London to the Tower, and there the new Queen met some eminent prisoners then confined in it, kissed them, and gave them their liberty. Among these was that Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, who had been imprisoned in the last reign for holding to the unreformed religion. Him she soon made chancellor.

The Duke of Northumberland had been taken prisoner, and, together with his son and five others, was quickly brought before the Council. He, not unnaturally, asked that Council, in his defence, whether it was treason to obey orders that had been issued under the great seal; and, if it were, whether they, who had obeyed them too, ought to be his judges? But they made light of these points; and, being resolved to have him out of the way, soon sentenced him to death. He had risen into power upon the death of another man, and made but a poor show (as might be expected) when he himself lay low. He entreated Gardiner to let him live, if it were only in a mouse's hole; and, when he ascended the scaffold to be beheaded on Tower-Hill, addressed the people in a miserable way, saying that he had been incited by others, and exhorting them to return to the unreformed religion, which he told them was his faith. There seems reason to suppose that he expected a pardon even then, in return for this confession; but it matters little whether he did or not. His head was struck off.

Mary was now crowned Queen. She was thirty-seven years of age, short and thin, wrinkled in the face, and very unhealthy. But she had a great liking for show and for bright colours, and all the ladies of her Court were magnificently dressed. She had a great liking too for old customs, without much sense in them; and she was oiled in the oldest way, and blessed in the oldest way, and done all manner of things to in the oldest way, at her coronation. I hope they did her good.

She soon began to show her desire to put down the Reformed religion, and put up the unreformed one: though it was dangerous work as yet, the people being something wiser than they used to be. They even cast a shower of stones—and among them a dagger—at one of the royal chaplains who attacked the Reformed religion in a public sermon. But the Queen and her priests went steadily on. Ridley, the powerful bishop of the last reign, was seized and sent to the Tower. LATIMER, also celebrated among the clergy of the last reign, was likewise sent to the Tower, and Cranmer speedily followed. Latimer was an aged man; and, as his guards took him through Smithfield, he looked round it, and said, "This is a place that hath long groaned for me." For he knew well, what kind of bonfires would soon be burning. Nor was the knowledge confined to him. The prisons were fast filled with the chief Protestants, who were there left rotting in darkness, hunger, dirt, and separation from their friends; many,

who had time left them for escape, fled from the kingdom; and the dullest of the people began, now, to see what was coming.

It came on fast. A Parliament was got together; not without strong suspicion of unfairness; and they annulled the divorce, formerly pronounced by Cranmer between the Queen's mother and King Henry the Eighth, and unmade all the laws on the subject of religion that had been made in the last King Edward's reign. They began their proceedings, in violation of the law, by having the old mass said before them in Latin, and by turning out a bishop who would not kneel down. They also declared guilty of treason, Lady Jane Grey for aspiring to the Crown; her husband, for being her husband; and Cranmer, for not believing in the mass aforesaid. They then prayed the Queen graciously to choose a husband for herself, as soon as might be.

Now, the question who should be the Queen's husband had given rise to a great deal of discussion, and to several contending parties. Some said Cardinal Pole was the man—but the Queen was of opinion that he was *not* the man, he being too old and too much of a student. Others said that the gallant young COURTENAY, whom the Queen had made Earl of Devonshire, was the man—and the Queen thought so too, for a while; but she changed her mind. At last it appeared that PHILIP, PRINCE OF SPAIN, was certainly the man—though certainly not the people's man; for they detested the idea of such a marriage from the beginning to the end, and murmured that the Spaniard would establish in England, by the aid of foreign soldiers, the worst abuses of the Popish religion, and even the terrible Inquisition itself.

These discontents gave rise to a conspiracy for marrying young Courtenay to the Princess Elizabeth, and setting them up, with popular tumults all over the kingdom, against the Queen. This was discovered in time by Gardiner; but in Kent, the old bold county, the people rose in their old bold way. SIR THOMAS WYAT, a man of great daring, was their leader. He raised his standard at Maidstone, marched on to Rochester, established himself in the old castle there, and prepared to hold out against the Duke of Norfolk, who came against him with a party of the Queen's guards, and a body of five hundred London men. The London men, however, were all for Elizabeth, and not at all for Mary. They declared, under the castle walls, for Wyat; the Duke retreated; and Wyat came on to Deptford, at the head of fifteen thousand men.

But these, in their turn, fell away. When he came to Southwark, there were only two thousand left. Not dismayed by finding the London citizens in arms, and the guns at the Tower ready to oppose his crossing the river there, Wyatt led them off to Kingston-upon-Thames, intending to cross the bridge that he knew to be in that place, and so to work his way round to Ludgate, one of the old gates of the City. He found the bridge broken down, but mended it, came across, and bravely fought his way up Fleet Street to Ludgate Hill. Finding the gate closed against him, he fought his way back again, sword in hand, to Temple Bar. Here, being overpowered, he surrendered himself, and three or four hundred of his men were taken, besides a hundred killed. Wyatt, in a moment of weakness (and perhaps of torture) was afterwards made to accuse the Princess Elizabeth as his accomplice to some very small extent. But his manhood soon returned to him, and he refused to save his life by making any more false confessions. He was quartered and distributed in the usual brutal way, and from fifty to a hundred of his followers were hanged. The rest were led out, with halters round their necks, to be pardoned, and to make a parade of crying out, "God save Queen Mary!"

In the danger of this rebellion, the Queen showed herself to be a woman of courage and spirit. She disdained to retreat to any place of safety, and went down to the Guildhall, sceptre in hand, and made a gallant speech to the Lord Mayor and citizens. But on the day after Wyatt's defeat, she did the most cruel act, even of her cruel reign, in signing the warrant for the execution of Lady Jane Grey.

They tried to persuade Lady Jane to accept the unreformed religion; but she steadily refused. On the morning when she was to die, she saw from her window the bleeding and headless body of her husband brought back in a cart from the scaffold on Tower Hill where he had laid down his life. But, as she had declined to see him before his execution, lest she should be overpowered and not make a good end, so, she even now showed a constancy and calmness that will never be forgotten. She came up to the scaffold with a firm step and a quiet face, and addressed the bystanders in a steady voice. They were not numerous; for she was too young, too innocent and fair, to be murdered before the people on Tower Hill, as her husband had just been; so, the place of her execution was within the Tower itself. She said that she had done an unlawful act in taking what was Queen Mary's right; but that she had done so with no bad

intent, and that she died a humble Christian. She begged the executioner to despatch her quickly, and she asked him, "Will you take my head off before I lay me down?" He answered, "No, Madam," and then she was very quiet while they bandaged her eyes. Being blinded, and unable to see the block on which she was to lay her young head, she was seen to feel about for it with her hands, and was heard to say, confused, "O what shall I do! Where is it?" Then they guided her to the right place, and the executioner struck off her head. You know too well, now, what dreadful deeds the executioner did in England, through many many years, and how his axe descended on the hateful block through the necks of some of the bravest, wisest, and best in the land. But it never struck so cruel and so vile a blow as this.

The father of Lady Jane soon followed, but was little pitied. Queen Mary's next object was to lay hold of Elizabeth, and this was pursued with great eagerness. Five hundred men were sent to her retired house at Ashridge, by Berkhamstead, with orders to bring her up, alive or dead. They got there at ten at night, when she was sick in bed. But, their leaders followed her lady into her bedchamber, whence she was brought out betimes next morning, and put into a litter to be conveyed to London. She was so weak and ill, that she was five days on the road; still, she was so resolved to be seen by the people that she had the curtains of the litter opened; and so, very pale and sickly, passed through the streets. She wrote to her sister, saying she was innocent of any crime, and asking why she was made a prisoner; but she got no answer, and was ordered to the Tower. They took her in by the Traitor's Gate, to which she objected, but in vain. One of the lords who conveyed her offered to cover her with his cloak, as it was raining, but she put it away from her, proudly and scornfully, and passed into the Tower, and sat down in a courtyard on a stone. They besought her to come in out of the wet; but she answered that it was better sitting there, than in a worse place. At length she went to her apartment, where she was kept a prisoner, though not so close a prisoner as at Woodstock, whither she was afterwards removed, and where she is said to have one day envied a milkmaid whom she heard singing in the sunshine as she went through the green fields. Gardiner, than whom there were not many worse men among the fierce and sullen priests, cared little to keep secret his stern desire for her death: being used to say that it was of little service to shake

off the leaves, and lop the branches of the tree of heresy, if its root, the hope of heretics, were left. He failed, however, in his benevolent design. Elizabeth was, at length, released; and Hatfield House was assigned to her as a residence, under the care of one SIR THOMAS POPE.

It would seem that Philip, the Prince of Spain, was a main cause of this change in Elizabeth's fortunes. He was not an amiable man, being, on the contrary, proud, overbearing, and gloomy; but he and the Spanish lords who came over with him, assuredly did discountenance the idea of doing any violence to the Princess. It may have been mere prudence, but we will hope it was manhood and honour. The Queen had been expecting her husband with great impatience, and at length he came, to her great joy, though he never cared much for her. They were married by Gardiner, at Winchester, and there was more holiday-making among the people; but they had their old distrust of this Spanish marriage, in which even the Parliament shared. Though the members of that Parliament were far from honest, and were strongly suspected to have been bought with Spanish money, they would pass no bill to enable the Queen to set aside the Princess Elizabeth and appoint her own successor.

Although Gardiner failed in this object, as well as in the darker one of bringing the Princess to the scaffold, he went on at a great pace in the revival of the unreformed religion. A new Parliament was packed, in which there were no Protestants. Preparations were made to receive Cardinal Pole in England as the Pope's messenger, bringing his holy declaration that all the nobility who had acquired Church property, should keep it—which was done to enlist their selfish interest on the Pope's side. Then a great scene was enacted, which was the triumph of the Queen's plans. Cardinal Pole arrived in great splendour and dignity, and was received with great pomp. The Parliament joined in a petition expressive of their sorrow at the change in the national religion, and praying him to receive the country again into the Popish Church. With the Queen sitting on her throne, and the King on one side of her, and the Cardinal on the other, and the Parliament present, Gardiner read the petition aloud. The Cardinal then made a great speech, and was so obliging as to say that all was forgotten and forgiven, and that the kingdom was solemnly made Roman Catholic again.

Everything was now ready for the lighting of the terrible bonfires. The Queen having de-

clared to the Council, in writing, that she would wish none of her subjects to be burnt without some of the Council being present, and that she would particularly wish there to be good sermons at all burnings, the Council knew pretty well what was to be done next. So, after the Cardinal had blessed all the bishops as a preface to the burnings, the Chancellor Gardiner opened a High Court at Saint Mary Overy, on the Southwark side of London Bridge, for the trial of heretics. Here, two of the late Protestant clergymen, HOOPER, Bishop of Gloucester, and ROGERS, a Prebendary of St. Paul's, were brought to be tried. Hooper was tried first for being married, though a priest, and for not believing in the mass. He admitted both of these accusations, and said that the mass was a wicked imposition. Then they tried Rogers, who said the same. Next morning the two were brought up to be sentenced; and then Rogers said that his poor wife, being a German woman and a stranger in the land, he hoped might be allowed to come to speak to him before he died. To this the inhuman Gardiner replied, that she was not his wife. "Yea, but she is, my lord," said Rogers, "and she hath been my wife these eighteen years." His request was still refused, and they were both sent to Newgate; all those who stood in the streets to sell things, being ordered to put out their lights that the people might not see them. But, the people stood at their doors with candles in their hands, and prayed for them as they went by. Soon afterwards, Rogers was taken out of jail to be burnt in Smithfield; and, in the crowd as he went along, he saw his poor wife and his ten children, of whom the youngest was a little baby. And so he was burnt to death.

The next day, Hooper, who was to be burnt at Gloucester, was brought out to take his last journey, and was made to wear a hood over his face that he might not be known by the people. But, they did know him for all that, down in his own part of the country; and, when he came near Gloucester, they lined the road, making prayers and lamentations. His guards took him to a lodging, where he slept soundly all night. At nine o'clock next morning, he was brought forth leaning on a staff; for he had taken cold in prison, and was infirm. The iron stake, and the iron chain which was to bind him to it, were fixed up near a great elm-tree in a pleasant open place before the cathedral, where, on peaceful Sundays, he had been accustomed to preach and to pray, when he was bishop of Gloucester. This tree, which had no leaves

then, it being February, was filled with people; and the priests of Gloucester College were looking complacently on from a window, and there was a great concourse of spectators in every spot from which a glimpse of the dreadful sight could be beheld. When the old man kneeled down on the small platform at the foot of the stake, and prayed aloud, the nearest people were observed to be so attentive to his prayers that they were ordered to stand farther back; for it did not suit the Romish Church to have those Protestant words heard. His prayers concluded, he went up to the stake and was stripped to his shirt, and chained ready for the fire. One of his guards had such compassion on him that, to shorten his agonies, he tied some packets of gunpowder about him. Then they heaped up wood and straw and reeds, and set them all alight. But, unhappily, the wood was green and damp, and there was a wind blowing that blew what flame there was, away. Thus, through three-quarters of an hour, the good old man was scorched and roasted and smoked, as the fire rose and sank; and all that time they saw him, as he burned, moving his lips in prayer, and beating his breast with one hand, even after the other was burnt away and had fallen off.

Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, were taken to Oxford to dispute with a commission of priests and doctors about the mass. They were shamefully treated; and it is reported that the Oxford scholars hissed and howled and groaned, and mis-conducted themselves in an anything but a scholarly way. The prisoners were taken back to jail, and afterwards tried in St. Mary's Church. They were all found guilty. On the sixteenth of the month of October, Ridley and Latimer were brought out, to make another of the dreadful bonfires.

The scene of the suffering of these two good Protestant men was in the City ditch, near Baliol College. On coming to the dreadful spot, they kissed the stakes, and then embraced each other. And then a learned doctor got up into a pulpit which was placed there, and preached a sermon from the text, "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." When you think of the charity of burning men alive, you may imagine that this learned doctor had a rather brazen face. Ridley would have answered his sermon when it came to an end, but was not allowed. When Latimer was stripped, it appeared that he had dressed himself under his other clothes, in a new shroud; and, as he stood in it before all the people, it was noted of him, and long remembered, that,

whereas he had been stooping and feeble but a few minutes before, he now stood upright and handsome, in the knowledge that he was dying for a just and a great cause. Ridley's brother-in-law was there with bags of gunpowder; and when they were both chained up, he tied them round their bodies. Then, a light was thrown upon the pile to fire it. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley," said Latimer, at that awful moment, "and play the man! We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." And then he was seen to make motions with his hands as if he were washing them in the flames, and to stroke his aged face with them, and was heard to cry, "Father of Heaven, receive my soul!" He died quickly, but the fire, after having burned the legs of Ridley, sunk. There he lingered, chained to the iron post, and crying, "O! I cannot burn! O! for Christ's sake let the fire come unto me!" And still, when his brother-in-law had heaped on more wood, he was heard through the blinding smoke, still dismally crying, "O! I cannot burn, I cannot burn!" At last, the gunpowder caught fire, and ended his miseries.

Five days after this fearful scene, Gardiner went to his tremendous account before God, for the cruelties he had so much assisted in committing.

Cranmer remained still alive and in prison. He was brought out again in February, for more examining and trying, by Bonner, Bishop of London: another man of blood, who had succeeded to Gardiner's work, even in his lifetime, when Gardiner was tired of it. Cranmer was now degraded as a priest, and left for death; but if the Queen hated any one on earth, she hated him, and it was resolved that he should be ruined and disgraced to the utmost. There is no doubt that the Queen and her husband personally urged on these deeds, because they wrote to the Council, urging them to be active in the kindling of the fearful fires. As Cranmer was known not to be a firm man, a plan was laid for surrounding him with artful people, and inducing him to recant to the unreformed religion. Deans and friars visited him, played at bowls with him, showed him various attentions, talked persuasively with him, gave him money for his prison comforts, and induced him to sign, I fear, as many as six recantations. But when, after all, he was taken out to be burnt, he was nobly true to his better self, and made a glorious end.

After prayers and a sermon, Dr. Cole, the preacher of the day (who had been one of the

artful priests about Cranmer in prison), required him to make a public confession of his faith before the people. This, Cole did, expecting that he would declare himself a Roman Catholic. "I *will* make a profession of my faith," said Cranmer, "and with a good will too."

Then, he arose before them all, and took from the sleeve of his robe a written prayer and read it aloud. That done, he kneeled and said the Lord's Prayer, all the people joining; and then he arose again and told them that he believed in the Bible, and that in what he had lately written, he had written what was not the truth, and that, because his right hand had signed those papers, he would burn his right hand first when he came to the fire. As for the Pope, he did refuse him and denounce him as the enemy of Heaven. Hereupon the pious Dr. Cole cried out to the guards to stop that heretic's mouth and take him away.

So they took him away, and chained him to the stake, where he hastily took off his own clothes to make ready for the flames. And he stood before the people with a bald head and a white and flowing beard. He was so firm now, when the worst was come, that he again declared against his recantation, and was so impressive and so undismayed, that a certain lord, who was one of the directors of the execution, called out to the men to make haste! When the fire was lighted, Cranmer, true to his latest word, stretched out his right hand, and crying out, "This hand hath offended!" held it among the flames, until it blazed and burned away. His heart was found entire among his ashes, and he left at last a memorable name in English history. Cardinal Pole celebrated the day by saying his first mass, and next day he was made Archbishop of Canterbury in Cranmer's place.

The Queen's husband, who was now mostly abroad in his own dominions, and generally made a coarse jest of her to his more familiar courtiers, was at war with France, and came over to seek the assistance of England. England was very unwilling to engage in a French war for his sake; but it happened that the King of France, at this very time, aided a descent upon the English coast. Hence, war was declared, greatly to Philip's satisfaction; and the Queen raised a sum of money with which to carry it on, by every unjustifiable means in her power. It met with no profitable return, for the French Duke of Guise surprised Calais, and the English sustained a complete defeat. The losses they met with in France greatly mortified the national pride, and the Queen never recovered the blow.

There was a bad fever raging in England at this time, and I am glad to write that the Queen took it, and the hour of her death came. "When I am dead and my body is opened," she said to those around her, "ye shall find CALAIS written on my heart." I should have thought, if anything were written on it, they would have found the words—JANE GREY, HOOPER, ROGERS, RIDLEY, LATIMER, CRANMER, AND THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE BURNT ALIVE WITHIN FOUR YEARS OF MY WICKED REIGN, INCLUDING SIXTY WOMEN AND FORTY LITTLE CHILDREN. But it is enough that their deaths were written in Heaven.

The Queen died on the seventeenth of November, fifteen hundred and fifty-eight, after reigning not quite five years and a half, and in the forty-fourth year of her age. Cardinal Pole died of the same fever next day.

AS BLOODY QUEEN MARY, this woman has become famous, and as BLOODY QUEEN MARY, she will ever be justly remembered with horror and detestation in Great Britain. Her memory has been held in such abhorrence that some writers have arisen in later years to take her part, and to show that she was, upon the whole, quite an amiable and cheerful sovereign! "By their fruits ye shall know them," said OUR SAVIOUR. The stake and the fire were the fruits of this reign, and you will judge this Queen by nothing else.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ENGLAND UNDER ELIZABETH.



HERE was great rejoicing all over the land when the Lords of the Council went down to Hatfield, to hail the Princess Elizabeth as the new Queen of England. Weary of the barbarities of Mary's reign, the people looked with hope and gladness to the new Sovereign. The nation seemed to wake from a horrible dream; and Heaven, so long hidden by the smoke of the fires that roasted men and women to death, appeared to brighten once more.

Queen Elizabeth was five-and-twenty years of age when she rode through the streets of London, from the Tower to Westminster Abbey, to be crowned. Her countenance was strongly marked, but on the whole, commanding and dignified; her hair was red, and her nose something too long and sharp for a woman's. She was not the beautiful creature her courtiers made out; but she was well enough, and no

doubt looked all the better for coming after the dark and gloomy Mary. She was well educated, but a roundabout writer, and rather a hard swearer and coarse talker. She was clever, but cunning and deceitful, and inherited much of her father's violent temper. I mention this now, because she has been so over-praised by one party, and so over-abused by another, that it is hardly possible to understand the greater part of her reign without first understanding what kind of a woman she really was.

She began her reign with the great advantage of having a very wise and careful Minister, SIR WILLIAM CECIL, whom she afterwards made LORD BURLEIGH. Altogether, the people had greater reason for rejoicing than they usually had, when there were processions in the streets; and they were happy with some reason. All kinds of shows and images were set up; Gog and MAGOG were hoisted to the top of Temple Bar; and (which was more to the purpose) the Corporation dutifully presented the young Queen with the sum of a thousand marks in gold—so heavy a present, that she was obliged to take it into her carriage with both hands. The coronation was a great success; and, on the next day, one of the courtiers presented a petition to the new Queen, praying that as it was the custom to release some prisoners on such occasions, she would have the goodness to release the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and also the Apostle Saint Paul, who had been for some time shut up in a strange language so that the people could not get at them.

To this, the Queen replied that it would be better first to inquire of themselves whether they desired to be released or not; and, as a means of finding out, a great public discussion—a sort of religious tournament—was appointed to take place between certain champions of the two religions, in Westminster Abbey. You may suppose that it was soon made pretty clear to common sense, that for people to benefit by what they repeat or read, it is rather necessary they should understand something about it. Accordingly, a Church Service in plain English was settled, and other laws and regulations were made, completely establishing the great work of the Reformation. The Romish bishops and champions were not harshly dealt with, all things considered; and the Queen's Ministers were both prudent and merciful.

The one great trouble of this reign, and the unfortunate cause of the greater part of such turmoil and bloodshed as occurred in it, was MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS. We will try to understand, in as few words as possible, who

Mary was, what she was, and how she came to be a thorn in the royal pillow of Elizabeth.

She was the daughter of the Queen Regent of Scotland, MARY OF GUISE. She had been married, when a mere child, to the Dauphin, the son and heir of the King of France. The Pope, who pretended that no one could rightfully wear the crown of England without his gracious permission, was strongly opposed to Elizabeth, who had not asked for the said gracious permission. And as Mary Queen of Scots would have inherited the English crown in right of her birth, supposing the English Parliament not to have altered the succession, the Pope himself, and most of the discontented who were followers of his, maintained that Mary was the rightful Queen of England, and Elizabeth the wrongful Queen. Mary being so closely connected with France, and France being jealous of England, there was far greater danger in this than there would have been if she had had no alliance with that great power. And when her young husband, on the death of his father, became FRANCIS THE SECOND, King of France, the matter grew very serious. For, the young couple styled themselves King and Queen of England, and the Pope was disposed to help them by doing all the mischief he could.

Now, the reformed religion, under the guidance of a stern and powerful preacher, named JOHN KNOX, and other such men, had been making fierce progress in Scotland. It was still a half savage country, where there was a great deal of murdering and rioting continually going on; and the Reformers, instead of reforming those evils as they should have done, went to work in the ferocious old Scottish spirit, laying churches and chapels waste, pulling down pictures and altars, and knocking about the Grey Friars, and the Black Friars, and the White Friars, and the friars of all sorts of colours, in all directions. This obdurate and harsh spirit of the Scottish Reformers (the Scotch have always been rather a sullen and frowning people in religious matters) put up the blood of the Romish French court, and caused France to send troops over to Scotland, with the hope of setting the friars of all sorts of colours on their legs again; of conquering that country first, and England afterwards; and so crushing the Reformation all to pieces. The Scottish Reformers, who had formed a great league which they called The Congregation of the Lord, secretly represented to Elizabeth that, if the reformed religion got the worst of it with them, it would be likely to get the worst of it in England too; and thus Elizabeth, though she had a high notion of the rights of Kings and

Queens to do anything they liked, sent an army to Scotland to support the Reformers, who were in arms against their sovereign. All these proceedings led to a treaty of peace at Edinburgh, under which the French consented to depart from the kingdom. By a separate treaty, Mary and her young husband engaged to renounce their assumed title of King and Queen of England. But this treaty they never fulfilled.

It happened, soon after matters had got to this state, that the young French King died, leaving Mary a young widow. She was then invited by her Scottish subjects to return home and reign over them; and as she was not now happy where she was, she, after a little time, complied.

Elizabeth had been Queen three years, when Mary Queen of Scots embarked at Calais for her own rough quarrelling country. As she came out of the harbour, a vessel was lost before her eyes, and she said, "O! good God! what an omen this is for such a voyage!" She was very fond of France, and sat on the deck, looking back at it and weeping, until it was quite dark. When she went to bed, she directed to be called at daybreak, if the French coast were still visible, that she might behold it for the last time. As it proved to be a clear morning, this was done, and she again wept for the country she was leaving, and said many times, "Farewell, France! Farewell, France! I shall never see thee again!" All this was long remembered afterwards as sorrowful and interesting in a fair young princess of nineteen. Indeed, I am afraid it gradually came, together with her other distresses, to surround her with greater sympathy than she deserved.

When she came to Scotland, and took up her abode at the palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh, she found herself among uncouth strangers and wild uncomfortable customs very different from her experiences in the court of France. The very people who were disposed to love her, made her head ache when she was tired out by her voyage, with a serenade of discordant music—a fearful concert of bagpipes, I suppose—and brought her and her train home to her palace on miserable little Scotch horses that appeared to be half starved. Among the people who were not disposed to love her, she found the powerful leaders of the Reformed Church, who were bitter upon her amusements, however innocent, and denounced music and dancing as works of the devil. John Knox himself often lectured her, violently and angrily, and did much to make her life unhappy. All these reasons confirmed her old attachment to the Romish religion, and

caused her, there is no doubt, most imprudently and dangerously both for herself and for England too, to give a solemn pledge to the heads of the Romish Church that if she ever succeeded to the English crown, she would set up that religion again. In reading her unhappy history, you must always remember this; and also that during her whole life she was constantly put forward against the Queen, in some form or other, by the Romish party.

That Elizabeth, on the other hand, was not inclined to like her, is pretty certain. Elizabeth was very vain and jealous, and had an extraordinary dislike to people being married. She treated Lady Catherine Grey, sister of the beheaded Lady Jane, with such shameful severity, for no other reason than her being secretly married, that she died and her husband was ruined; so, when a second marriage for Mary began to be talked about, probably Elizabeth disliked her more. Not that Elizabeth wanted suitors of her own, for they started up from Spain, Austria, Sweden, and England. Her English lover at this time, and one whom she much favoured too, was LORD ROBERT DUDLEY, Earl of Leicester—himself secretly married to AMY ROBSART, the daughter of an English gentleman, whom he was strongly suspected of causing to be murdered, down at his country seat, Cumnor Hall in Berkshire, that he might be free to marry the Queen. Upon this story, the great writer, SIR WALTER SCOTT, has founded one of his best romances. But if Elizabeth knew how to lead her handsome favourite on, for her own vanity and pleasure, she knew how to stop him for her own pride; and his love, and all the other proposals, came to nothing. The Queen always declared in good set speeches, that she would never be married at all, but would live and die a Maiden Queen. It was a very pleasant and meritorious declaration I suppose; but it has been puffed and trumpeted so much, that I am rather tired of it myself.

Divers princes proposed to marry Mary, but the English court had reasons for being jealous of them all, and even proposed as a matter of policy that she should marry that very Earl of Leicester who had aspired to be the husband of Elizabeth. At last, LORD DARNLEY, son of the Earl of Lennox, and himself descended from the Royal Family of Scotland, went over with Elizabeth's consent to try his fortune at Holyrood. He was a tall simpleton; and could dance and play the guitar; but I know of nothing else he could do, unless it were to get drunk, and eat gluttonously, and make a contemptible spectacle of himself in many mean

and vain ways. However, he gained Mary's heart, not disdaining in the pursuit of his object to ally himself with one of her secretaries, DAVID RIZZIO, who had great influence with her. He soon married the Queen. This marriage does not say much for her, but what followed will presently say less.

Mary's brother, the EARL OF MURRAY, and head of the Protestant party in Scotland, had opposed this marriage, partly on religious grounds, and partly perhaps from personal dislike of the very contemptible bridegroom. When it had taken place, through Mary's gaining over to it the more powerful of the lords about her, she banished Murray for his pains; and, when he and some other nobles rose in arms to support the reformed religion, she herself, within a month of her wedding day, rode against them in armour with loaded pistols in her saddle. Driven out of Scotland, they presented themselves before Elizabeth—who called them traitors in public, and assisted them in private, according to her crafty nature.

Mary had been married but a little while, when she began to hate her husband, who, in his turn, began to hate that David Rizzio, with whom he had leagued to gain her favour, and whom he now believed to be her lover. He hated Rizzio to that extent, that he made a compact with LORD RUTHVEN and three other lords to get rid of him by murder. This wicked agreement they made in solemn secrecy upon the first of March, fifteen hundred and sixty-six, and on the night of Saturday the ninth, the conspirators were brought by Darnley up a private staircase, dark and steep, into a range of rooms where they knew that Mary was sitting at supper with her sister, Lady Argyle, and this doomed man. When they went into the room, Darnley took the Queen round the waist, and Lord Ruthven, who had risen from a bed of sickness to do this murder, came in, gaunt and ghastly, leaning on two men. Rizzio ran behind the Queen for shelter and protection. "Let him come out of the room," said Ruthven. "He shall not leave the room," replied the Queen; "I read his danger in your face, and it is my will that he remain here." They then set upon him, struggled with him, overturned the table, dragged him out, and killed him with fifty-six stabs. When the Queen heard that he was dead, she said, "No more tears. I will think now of revenge!"

Within a day or two, she gained her husband over, and prevailed on the tall idiot to abandon the conspirators and fly with her to Dunbar. There, he issued a proclamation, audaciously

and falsely denying that he had any knowledge of the late bloody business; and there they were joined by the EARL BOTHWELL and some other nobles. With their help, they raised eight thousand men, returned to Edinburgh, and drove the assassins into England. Mary soon afterwards gave birth to a son—still thinking of revenge.

That she should have had a greater scorn for her husband after his late cowardice and treachery than she had had before, was natural enough. There is little doubt that she now began to love Bothwell instead, and to plan with him means of getting rid of Darnley. Bothwell had such power over her that he induced her even to pardon the assassins of Rizzio. The arrangements for the christening of the young Prince were entrusted to him, and he was one of the most important people at the ceremony, where the child was named JAMES: Elizabeth being his godmother, though not present on the occasion. A week afterwards, Darnley, who had left Mary and gone to his father's house at Glasgow, being taken ill with the small-pox, she sent her own physician to attend him. But there is reason to apprehend that this was merely a show and a pretence, and that she knew what was doing, when Bothwell within another month proposed to one of the late conspirators against Rizzio, to murder Darnley, "for that it was the Queen's mind that he should be taken away." It is certain that on that very day she wrote to her ambassador in France, complaining of him, and yet went immediately to Glasgow, feigning to be very anxious about him, and to love him very much. If she wanted to get him in her power, she succeeded to her heart's content; for she induced him to go back with her to Edinburgh, and to occupy, instead of the palace, a lone house outside the city called the Kirk of Field. Here, he lived for about a week. One Sunday night, she remained with him until ten o'clock, and then left him, to go to Holyrood to be present at an entertainment given in celebration of the marriage of one of her favourite servants. At two o'clock in the morning the city was shaken by a great explosion, and the Kirk of Field was blown to atoms.

Darnley's body was found next day lying under a tree at some distance. How it came there, undisfigured and unscorched by gunpowder, and how this crime came to be so clumsily and strangely committed, it is impossible to discover. The deceitful character of Mary, and the deceitful character of Elizabeth, have rendered almost every part of their joint

history uncertain and obscure. But, I fear that Mary was unquestionably a party to her husband's murder, and that this was the revenge she had threatened. The Scotch people universally believed it. Voices cried out in the streets of Edinburgh in the dead of the night, for justice on the murderess. Placards were posted by unknown hands in the public places denouncing Bothwell as the murderer, and the Queen as his accomplice; and, when he afterwards married her (though himself already married), previously making a show of taking her prisoner by force, the indignation of the people knew no bounds. The women particularly are described as having been quite frantic against the Queen, and to have hooted and cried after her in the streets with terrific vehemence.

Such guilty unions seldom prosper. This husband and wife had lived together but a month, when they were separated for ever by the successes of a band of Scotch nobles who associated against them for the protection of the young Prince: whom Bothwell had vainly endeavoured to lay hold of, and whom he would certainly have murdered, if the EARL OF MAR, in whose hands the boy was, had not been firmly and honourably faithful to his trust. Before this angry power, Bothwell fled abroad, where he died, a prisoner and mad, nine miserable years afterwards. Mary being found by the associated lords to deceive them at every turn, was sent a prisoner to Lochleven Castle; which, as it stood in the midst of a lake, could only be approached by boat. Here, one LORD LINDSAY, who was so much of a brute that the nobles would have done better if they had chosen a mere gentleman for their messenger, made her sign her abdication, and appoint Murray, Regent of Scotland. Here, too, Murray saw her in a sorrowing and humbled state.

She had better have remained in the castle of Lochleven, dull prison as it was, with the rippling of the lake against it, and the moving shadows of the water on the room-walls; but she could not rest there, and more than once tried to escape. The first time she had nearly succeeded, dressed in the clothes of her own washerwoman, but, putting up her hand to prevent one of the boatmen from lifting her veil, the men suspected her, seeing how white it was, and rowed her back again. A short time afterwards, her fascinating manners enlisted in her cause a boy in the Castle, called the little DOUGLAS, who, while the family were at supper, stole the keys of the great gate, went softly out with the Queen, locked the gate on the outside, and rowed her away across the lake, sinking the

keys as they went along. On the opposite shore she was met by another Douglas, and some few lords; and, so accompanied, rode away on horseback to Hamilton, where they raised three thousand men. Here, she issued a proclamation declaring that the abdication she had signed in her prison was illegal, and requiring the Regent to yield to his lawful Queen. Being a steady soldier, and in no way discomposed although he was without an army, Murray pretended to treat with her, until he had collected a force about half equal to her own, and then he gave her battle. In one quarter of an hour he cut down all her hopes. She had another weary ride on horseback of sixty long Scotch miles, and took shelter at Dundrennan Abbey, whence she fled for safety to Elizabeth's dominions.

Mary Queen of Scots came to England—to her own ruin, the trouble of the kingdom, and the misery and death of many—in the year one thousand five hundred and sixty-eight. How she left it and the world, nineteen years afterwards, we have now to see.

SECOND PART.

WHEN Mary Queen of Scots arrived in England, without money and even without any other clothes than those she wore, she wrote to Elizabeth, representing herself as an innocent and injured piece of Royalty, and entreating her assistance to oblige her Scottish subjects to take her back again and obey her. But, as her character was already known in England to be a very different one from what she made it out to be, she was told in answer that she must first clear herself. Made uneasy by this condition, Mary, rather than stay in England, would have gone to Spain, or to France, or would even have gone back to Scotland. But, as her doing either would have been likely to trouble England afresh, it was decided that she should be detained here. She first came to Carlisle, and, after that, was moved about from castle to castle, as was considered necessary; but England she never left again.

After trying very hard to get rid of the necessity of clearing herself, Mary, advised by LORD HERRIES, her best friend in England, agreed to answer the charges against her, if the Scottish noblemen who made them would attend to maintain them before such English noblemen as Elizabeth might appoint for that purpose. Accordingly, such an assembly, under the name of a conference, met, first at York, and afterwards

at Hampton Court. In its presence Lord Lennox, Darnley's father, openly charged Mary with the murder of his son; and whatever Mary's friends may now say or write in her behalf, there is no doubt that, when her brother Murray produced against her a casket containing certain guilty letters and verses which he stated to have passed between her and Bothwell, she withdrew from the inquiry. Consequently, it is to be supposed that she was then considered guilty by those who had the best opportunities of judging of the truth, and that the feeling which afterwards arose in her behalf was a very generous but not a very reasonable one.

However, the DUKE OF NORFOLK, an honourable but rather weak nobleman, partly because Mary was captivating, partly because he was ambitious, partly because he was over-persuaded by artful plotters against Elizabeth, conceived a strong idea that he would like to marry the Queen of Scots—though he was a little frightened, too, by the letters in the casket. This idea being secretly encouraged by some of the noblemen of Elizabeth's court, and even by the favourite Earl of Leicester (because it was objected to by other favourites who were his rivals), Mary expressed her approval of it, and the King of France and the King of Spain are supposed to have done the same. It was not so quietly planned, though, but that it came to Elizabeth's ears, who warned the Duke "to be careful what sort of pillow he was going to lay his head upon." He made a humble reply at the time; but turned sulky soon afterwards, and, being considered dangerous, was sent to the Tower.

Thus, from the moment of Mary's coming to England she began to be the centre of plots and miseries.

A rise of the Catholics in the north was the next of these, and it was only checked by many executions and much bloodshed. It was followed by a great conspiracy of the Pope and some of the Catholic sovereigns of Europe to depose Elizabeth, place Mary on the throne, and restore the unreformed religion. It is almost impossible to doubt that Mary knew and approved of this; and the Pope himself was so hot in the matter that he issued a bull, in which he openly called Elizabeth the "pretended Queen" of England, excommunicated her, and excommunicated all her subjects who should continue to obey her. A copy of this miserable paper got into London, and was found one morning publicly posted on the Bishop of London's gate. A great hue and cry being raised, another copy was found in the chamber of a student of Lincoln's Inn, who confessed, being

put upon the rack, that he had received it from one JOHN FELTON, a rich gentleman who lived across the Thames, near Southwark. This John Felton, being put upon the rack too, confessed that he had posted the placard on the Bishop's gate. For this offence he was, within four days, taken to St. Paul's Churchyard, and there hanged and quartered. As to the Pope's bull, the people by the reformation having thrown off the Pope, did not care much, you may suppose, for the Pope's throwing off them. It was a mere dirty piece of paper, and not half so powerful as a street ballad.

On the very day when Felton was brought to his trial, the poor Duke of Norfolk was released. It would have been well for him had he kept away from the Tower evermore, and from the snares that had taken him there. But, even while he was in that dismal place he corresponded with Mary, and as soon as he was out of it, he began to plot again. Being discovered in correspondence with the Pope, with a view to a rising in England which should force Elizabeth to consent to his marriage with Mary and to repeal the laws against the Catholics, he was re-committed to the Tower and brought to trial. He was found guilty by the unanimous verdict of the Lords who tried him, and was sentenced to the block.

It is very difficult to make out, at this distance of time, and between opposite accounts, whether Elizabeth really was a humane woman, or desired to appear so, or was fearful of shedding the blood of people of great name who were popular in the country. Twice she commanded and countermanded the execution of this Duke, and it did not take place until five months after his trial. The scaffold was erected on Tower Hill, and there he died like a brave man. He refused to have his eyes bandaged, saying that he was not at all afraid of death; and he admitted the justice of his sentence, and was much regretted by the people.

Although Mary had shrunk at the most important time from disproving her guilt, she was very careful never to do anything that would admit it. All such proposals as were made to her by Elizabeth for her release, required that admission in some form or other, and therefore came to nothing. Moreover, both women being artful and treacherous, and neither ever trusting the other, it was not likely that they could ever make an agreement. So, the Parliament, aggravated by what the Pope had done, made new and strong laws against the spreading of the Catholic religion in England, and declared it treason in any one to say that the Queen and her successors

were not the lawful sovereigns of England. It would have done more than this, but for Elizabeth's moderation.

Since the Reformation, there had come to be three great sects of religious people—or people who called themselves so—in England; that is to say, those who belonged to the Reformed Church, those who belonged to the Unreformed Church, and those who were called the Puritans, because they said that they wanted to have everything very pure and plain in all the Church service. These last were for the most part an uncomfortable people, who thought it highly meritorious to dress in a hideous manner, talk through their noses, and oppose all harmless enjoyments. But they were powerful too, and very much in earnest, and they were one and all the determined enemies of the Queen of Scots. The Protestant feeling in England was further strengthened by the tremendous cruelties to which Protestants were exposed in France and in the Netherlands. Scores of thousands of them were put to death in those countries with every cruelty that can be imagined, and at last, in the autumn of the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-two, one of the greatest barbarities ever committed in the world took place at Paris.

It is called in history, THE MASSACRE OF SAINT BARTHOLOMEW, because it took place on Saint Bartholomew's Eve. The day fell on Saturday the twenty-third of August. On that day all the great leaders of the Protestants (who were there called HUGUENOTS) were assembled together, for the purpose, as was represented to them, of doing honour to the marriage of their chief, the young King of Navarre, with the sister of CHARLES THE NINTH: a miserable young King who then occupied the French throne. This dull creature was made to believe by his mother and other fierce Catholics about him that the Huguenots meant to take his life; and he was persuaded to give secret orders that, on the tolling of a great bell, they should be fallen upon by an overpowering force of armed men, and slaughtered wherever they could be found. When the appointed hour was close at hand, the stupid wretch, trembling from head to foot, was taken into a balcony by his mother to see the atrocious work begun. The moment the bell tolled, the murderers broke forth. During all that night and the two next days, they broke into the houses, fired the houses, shot and stabbed the Protestants, men, women, and children, and flung their bodies into the streets. They were shot at in the streets as they passed along, and their blood ran down the gutters. Upwards of ten thousand Protestants were killed in Paris

alone; in all France four or five times that number. To return thanks to Heaven for these diabolical murders, the Pope and his train actually went in public procession at Rome, and as if this were not shame enough for them, they had a medal struck to commemorate the event. But, however comfortable the wholesale murders were to these high authorities, they had not that soothing effect upon the doll-King. I am happy to state that he never knew a moment's peace afterwards; that he was continually crying out that he saw the Huguenots covered with blood and wounds falling dead before him; and that he died within a year, shrieking and yelling and raving to that degree, that if all the Popes who had ever lived had been rolled into one, they would not have afforded His guilty Majesty the slightest consolation.

When the terrible news of the massacre arrived in England, it made a powerful impression indeed upon the people. If they began to run a little wild against the Catholics at about this time, this fearful reason for it, coming so soon after the days of bloody Queen Mary, must be remembered in their excuse. The Court was not quite so honest as the people—but perhaps it sometimes is not. It received the French ambassador, with all the lords and ladies dressed in deep mourning, and keeping a profound silence. Nevertheless, a proposal of marriage which he had made to Elizabeth only two days before the eve of Saint Bartholomew, on behalf of the Duke of Alençon, the French King's brother, a boy of seventeen, still went on; while on the other hand, in her usual crafty way, the Queen secretly supplied the Huguenots with money and weapons.

I must say that for a Queen who made all those fine speeches, of which I have confessed myself to be rather tired, about living and dying a Maiden Queen, Elizabeth was "going" to be married pretty often. Besides always having some English favourite or other whom she by turns encouraged and swore at and knocked about—for the maiden Queen was very free with her fists—she held this French Duke off and on through several years. When he at last came over to England, the marriage articles were actually drawn up, and it was settled that the wedding should take place in six weeks. The Queen was then so bent upon it, that she prosecuted a poor Puritan named STUBBS, and a poor bookseller named PAGE, for writing and publishing a pamphlet against it. Their right hands were chopped off for this crime; and poor Stubbs—more loyal than I should have been myself under the circumstances—immediately

pulled off his hat with his left hand, and cried, "God save the Queen!" Stubbs was cruelly treated; for the marriage never took place after all, though the Queen pledged herself to the Duke with a ring from her own finger. He went away, no better than he came, when the courtship had lasted some ten years altogether; and he died a couple of years afterwards, mourned by Elizabeth, who appears to have been really fond of him. It is not much to her credit, for he was a bad enough member of a bad family.

To return to the Catholics. There arose two orders of priests, who were very busy in England, and who were much dreaded. These were the **JESUITS** (who were everywhere in all sorts of disguises), and the **SEMINARY PRIESTS**. The people had a great horror of the first, because they were known to have taught that murder was lawful if it were done with an object of which they approved; and they had a great horror of the second, because they came to teach the old religion, and to be the successors of "Queen Mary's priests," as those yet lingering in England were called, when they should die out. The severest laws were made against them, and were most unmercifully executed. Those who sheltered them in their houses often suffered heavily for what was an act of humanity; and the rack, that cruel torture which tore men's limbs asunder, was constantly kept going. What these unhappy men confessed, or what was ever confessed by any one under that agony, must always be received with great doubt, as it is certain that people have frequently owned to the most absurd and impossible crimes to escape such dreadful suffering. But I cannot doubt it to have been proved by papers, that there were many plots, both among the Jesuits, and with France, and with Scotland, and with Spain, for the destruction of Queen Elizabeth, for the placing of Mary on the throne, and for the revival of the old religion.

If the English people were too ready to believe in plots, there were, as I have said, good reasons for it. When the massacre of Saint Bartholomew was yet fresh in their recollection, a great Protestant Dutch hero, the **PRINCE OF ORANGE**, was shot by an assassin, who confessed that he had been kept and trained for the purpose in a college of Jesuits. The Dutch, in this surprise and distress, offered to make Elizabeth their sovereign, but she declined the honour, and sent them a small army instead, under the command of the Earl of Leicester, who, although a capital court favourite, was not much of a general. He did so little in Holland, that his campaign there would probably have been for-

gotten, but for its occasioning the death of one of the best writers, the best knights, and the best gentlemen of that or any age. This was **SIR PHILIP SIDNEY**, who was wounded by a musket ball in the thigh as he mounted a fresh horse, after having had his own killed under him. He had to ride back wounded, a long distance, and was very faint with fatigue and loss of blood, when some water, for which he had eagerly asked, was handed to him. But he was so good and gentle even then, that seeing a poor badly wounded common soldier lying on the ground, looking at the water with longing eyes, he said, "Thy necessity is greater than mine," and gave it up to him. This touching action of a noble heart is perhaps as well known as any incident in history—is as famous far and wide as the blood-stained Tower of London, with its axe, and block, and murders out of number. So delightful is an act of true humanity, and so glad are mankind to remember it.

At home, intelligence of plots began to thicken every day. I suppose the people never did live under such continual terrors as those by which they were possessed now, of Catholic risings, and burnings, and poisonings, and I don't know what. Still, we must always remember that they lived near and close to awful realities of that kind, and that with their experience it was not difficult to believe in any enormity. The government had the same fear, and did not take the best means of discovering the truth—for, besides torturing the suspected, it employed paid spies, who will always lie for their own profit. It even made some of the conspiracies it brought to light, by sending false letters to disaffected people, inviting them to join in pretended plots, which they too readily did.

But, one great real plot was at length discovered, and it ended the career of Mary, Queen of Scots. A seminary priest named **BALLARD**, and a Spanish soldier named **SAVAGE**, set on and encouraged by certain French priests, imparted a design to one **ANTONY BABINGTON**—a gentleman of fortune in Derbyshire, who had been for some time a secret agent of Mary's—for murdering the Queen. Babington then confided the scheme to some other Catholic gentlemen who were his friends, and they joined in it heartily. They were vain weak-headed young men, ridiculously confident, and preposterously proud of their plan; for they got a gimcrack painting made, of the six choice spirits who were to murder Elizabeth, with Babington in an attitude for the centre figure. Two of their number, however, one of whom was a priest, kept Elizabeth's wisest minister, **SIR**

FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, acquainted with the whole project from the first. The conspirators were completely deceived to the final point, when Babington gave Savage, because he was shabby, a ring from his finger, and some money from his purse, wherewith to buy himself new clothes in which to kill the Queen. Walsingham, having then full evidence against the whole band, and two letters of Mary's besides, resolved to seize them. Suspecting something wrong, they stole out of the city, one by one, and hid themselves in St. John's Wood, and other places which really were hiding places then; but they were all taken, and all executed. When they were seized, a gentleman was sent from Court to inform Mary of the fact, and of her being involved in the discovery. Her friends have complained that she was kept in very hard and severe custody. It does not appear very likely, for she was going out a hunting that very morning.

Queen Elizabeth had been warned long ago, by one in France who had good information of what was secretly doing, that in holding Mary alive, she held "the wolf who would devour her." The Bishop of London had, more lately, given the Queen's favourite minister the advice in writing, "forthwith to cut off the Scottish Queen's head." The question now was, what to do with her? The Earl of Leicester wrote a little note home from Holland, recommending that she should be quietly poisoned; that noble favourite having accustomed his mind, it is possible, to remedies of that nature. His black advice, however, was disregarded, and she was brought to trial at Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire, before a tribunal of forty, composed of both religions. There, and in the Star Chamber at Westminster, the trial lasted a fortnight. She defended herself with great ability, but could only deny the confessions that had been made by Babington and others; could only call her own letters, produced against her by her own secretaries, forgeries; and, in short, could only deny everything. She was found guilty, and declared to have incurred the penalty of death. The Parliament met, approved the sentence, and prayed the Queen to have it executed. The Queen replied that she requested them to consider whether no means could be found of saving Mary's life without endangering her own. The Parliament rejoined, No; and the citizens illuminated their houses and lighted bonfires, in token of their joy that all these plots and troubles were to be ended by the death of the Queen of Scots.

She, feeling sure that her time was now come,

wrote a letter to the Queen of England, making three entreaties; first, that she might be buried in France; secondly, that she might not be executed in secret, but before her servants and some others; thirdly, that after her death, her servants should not be molested, but should be suffered to go home with the legacies she left them. It was an affecting letter, and Elizabeth shed tears over it, but sent no answer. Then came a special ambassador from France, and another from Scotland, to intercede for Mary's life; and then the nation began to clamour, more and more, for her death.

What the real feelings or intentions of Elizabeth were, can never be known now; but I strongly suspect her of only wishing one thing more than Mary's death, and that was to keep free of the blame of it. On the first of February, one thousand five hundred and eighty-seven, Lord Burleigh having drawn out the warrant for the execution, the Queen sent to the secretary DAVISON to bring it to her, that she might sign it: which she did. Next day, when Davison told her it was sealed, she angrily asked him why such haste was necessary? Next day but one, she joked about it, and swore a little. Again, next day but one, she seemed to complain that it was not yet done, but still she would not be plain with those about her. So, on the seventh, the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, with the Sheriff of Northamptonshire, came with the warrant to Fotheringay, to tell the Queen of Scots to prepare for death.

When those messengers of ill omen were gone, Mary made a frugal supper, drank to her servants, read over her will, went to bed, slept for some hours, and then arose and passed the remainder of the night saying prayers. In the morning she dressed herself in her best clothes: and, at eight o'clock when the sheriff came for her to her chapel, took leave of her servants who were there assembled praying with her, and went down-stairs, carrying a Bible in one hand and a crucifix in the other. Two of her women and four of her men were allowed to be present in the hall; where a low scaffold, only two feet from the ground, was erected and covered with black; and where the executioner from the Tower, and his assistant, stood, dressed in black velvet. The hall was full of people. While the sentence was being read she sat upon a stool; and, when it was finished, she again denied her guilt, as she had done before. The Earl of Kent and the Dean of Peterborough, in their Protestant zeal, made some very unnecessary speeches to her; to which she replied that she died in the Catholic religion, and they need

not trouble themselves about that matter. When her head and neck were uncovered by the executioners, she said that she had not been used to be undressed by such hands, or before so much company. Finally, one of her women fastened a cloth over her face, and she laid her neck upon the block, and repeated more than once in Latin, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!" Some say her head was struck off in two blows, some say in three. However that be, when it was held up, streaming with blood, the real hair beneath the false hair she had long worn was seen to be as grey as that of a woman of seventy, though she was at that time only in her forty-sixth year. All her beauty was gone.

But she was beautiful enough to her little dog, who cowered under her dress, frightened, when she went upon the scaffold, and who lay down beside her headless body when all her earthly sorrows were over.

THIRD PART.

ON its being formally made known to Elizabeth that the sentence had been executed on the Queen of Scots, she showed the utmost grief and rage, drove her favourites from her with violent indignation, and sent Davison to the Tower; from which place he was only released in the end by paying an immense fine which completely ruined him. Elizabeth not only over-acted her part in making these pretences, but most basely reduced to poverty one of her faithful servants for no other fault than obeying her commands.

James, King of Scotland, Mary's son, made a show likewise of being very angry on the occasion; but he was a pensioner of England to the amount of five thousand pounds a year, and he had known very little of his mother, and he possibly regarded her as the murderer of his father, and he soon took it quietly.

Philip, King of Spain, however, threatened to do greater things than ever had been done yet, to set up the Catholic religion and punish Protestant England. Elizabeth, hearing that he and the Prince of Parma were making great preparations for this purpose, in order to be beforehand with them sent out ADMIRAL DRAKE (a famous navigator, who had sailed about the world, and had already brought great plunder from Spain) to the port of Cadiz, where he burnt a hundred vessels full of stores. This great loss obliged the Spaniards to put off the invasion for a year; but it was none the less formidable for

that, amounting to one hundred and thirty ships, nineteen thousand soldiers, eight thousand sailors, two thousand slaves, and between two and three thousand great guns. England was not idle in making ready to resist this great force. All the men between sixteen years old and sixty, were trained and drilled; the national fleet of ships (in number only thirty-four at first) was enlarged by public contributions and by private ships, fitted out by noblemen; the city of London, of its own accord, furnished double the number of ships and men that it was required to provide; and, if ever the national spirit was up in England, it was up all through the country to resist the Spaniards. Some of the Queen's advisers were for seizing the principal English Catholics, and putting them to death; but the Queen—who, to her honour, used to say, that she would never believe any ill of her subjects, which a parent would not believe of her own children—rejected the advice, and only confined a few of those who were the most suspected, in the fens in Lincolnshire. The great body of Catholics deserved this confidence; for they behaved most loyally, nobly, and bravely.

So, with all England firing up like one strong angry man, and with both sides of the Thames fortified, and with the soldiers under arms, and with the sailors in their ships, the country waited for the coming of the proud Spanish fleet, which was called THE INVINCIBLE ARMADA. The Queen herself, riding in armour on a white horse, and the Earl of Essex and the Earl of Leicester holding her bridle rein, made a brave speech to the troops at Tilbury Fort opposite Gravesend, which was received with such enthusiasm as is seldom known. Then came the Spanish Armada into the English Channel, sailing along in the form of a half moon, of such great size that it was seven miles broad. But the English were quickly upon it, and woe then to all the Spanish ships that dropped a little out of the half moon, for the English took them instantly! And it soon appeared that the great Armada was anything but invincible, for on a summer night, bold Drake sent eight blazing fire-ships right into the midst of it. In terrible consternation the Spaniards tried to get out to sea, and so became dispersed; the English pursued them at a great advantage; a storm came on, and drove the Spaniards among rocks and shoals; and the swift end of the Invincible fleet was, that it lost thirty great ships and ten thousand men, and, defeated and disgraced, sailed home again. Being afraid to go by the English Channel, it sailed all round Scotland and Ireland; some of the ships getting cast away on the latter

coast in bad weather, the Irish, who were a kind of savages, plundered those vessels and killed their crews. So ended this great attempt to invade and conquer England. And I think it will be a long time before any other invincible fleet coming to England with the same object, will fare much better than the Spanish Armada.

Though the Spanish king had had this bitter taste of English bravery, he was so little the wiser for it, as still to entertain his old designs, and even to conceive the absurd idea of placing

his daughter on the English throne. But the Earl of Essex, SIR WALTER RALEIGH, SIR THOMAS HOWARD, and some other distinguished leaders, put to sea from Plymouth, entered the port of Cadiz once more, obtained a complete victory over the shipping assembled there, and got possession of the town. In obedience to the Queen's express instructions, they behaved with great humanity; and the principal loss of the Spaniards was a vast sum of money which they had to pay for ransom. This was one of many gallant



THE SPANISH ARMADA.

achievements on the sea, effected in this reign. Sir Walter Raleigh himself, after marrying a maid of honour and giving offence to the Maiden Queen thereby, had already sailed to South America in search of gold.

The Earl of Leicester was now dead, and so was Sir Thomas Walsingham, whom Lord Burleigh was soon to follow. The principal favourite was the EARL OF ESSEX, a spirited and handsome man, a favourite with the people too as well as with the Queen, and possessed of many

admirable qualities. It was much debated at Court whether there should be peace with Spain or no, and he was very urgent for war. He also tried hard to have his own way in the appointment of a deputy to govern in Ireland. One day, while this question was in dispute, he hastily took offence, and turned his back upon the Queen; as a gentle reminder of which impropriety, the Queen gave him a tremendous box on the ear, and told him to go to the devil. He went home instead, and did not reappear at

Court for half a year or so, when he and the Queen were reconciled, though never (as some suppose) thoroughly.

From this time the fate of the Earl of Essex and that of the Queen seemed to be blended together. The Irish were still perpetually quarrelling and fighting among themselves, and he went over to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, to the great joy of his enemies (Sir Walter Raleigh among the rest), who were glad to have so dangerous a rival far off. Not being by any means successful there, and knowing that his enemies would take advantage of that circumstance to injure him with the Queen, he came home again, though against her orders. The Queen being taken by surprise when he appeared before her, gave him her hand to kiss, and he was overjoyed—though it was not a very lovely hand by this time—but in the course of the same day she ordered him to confine himself to his room, and two or three days afterwards had him taken into custody. With the same sort of caprice—and as capricious an old woman she now was, as ever wore a crown or a head either—she sent him broth from her own table on his falling ill from anxiety, and cried about him.

He was a man who could find comfort and occupation in his books, and he did so for a time; not the least happy time, I dare say, of his life. But it happened unfortunately for him, that he held a monopoly in sweet wines: which means that nobody could sell them without purchasing his permission. This right, which was only for a term, expiring, he applied to have it renewed. The Queen refused, with the rather strong observation—but she *did* make strong observations—that an unruly beast must be stinted in his food. Upon this, the angry Earl, who had been already deprived of many offices, thought himself in danger of complete ruin, and turned against the Queen, whom he called a vain old woman who had grown as crooked in her mind as she had in her figure. These uncomplimentary expressions the ladies of the Court immediately snapped up and carried to the Queen, whom they did not put in a better temper, you may believe. The same Court ladies, when they had beautiful dark hair of their own, used to wear false red hair, to be like the Queen. So they were not very high-spirited ladies, however high in rank.

The worst object of the Earl of Essex, and some friends of his who used to meet at LORD SOUTHAMPTON'S house, was to obtain possession of the Queen, and oblige her by force to dismiss her ministers and change her favourites. On Saturday the seventh of February, one thousand

six hundred and one, the council suspecting this, summoned the Earl to come before them. He, pretending to be ill, declined; it was then settled among his friends, that as the next day would be Sunday, when many of the citizens usually assembled at the Cross by St. Paul's Cathedral, he should make one bold effort to induce them to rise and follow him to the Palace.

So, on the Sunday morning, he and a small body of adherents started out of his house—Essex House by the Strand, with steps to the river—having first shut up in it, as prisoners, some members of the council who came to examine him—and hurried into the City with the Earl at their head, crying out, "For the Queen! For the Queen! A plot is laid for my life!" No one heeded them, however, and when they came to St. Paul's there were no citizens there. In the meantime the prisoners at Essex House had been released by one of the Earl's own friends; he had been promptly proclaimed a traitor in the City itself; and the streets were barricaded with carts and guarded by soldiers. The Earl got back to his house by water, with difficulty, and after an attempt to defend his house against the troops and cannon by which it was soon surrounded, gave himself up that night. He was brought to trial on the nineteenth, and found guilty; on the twenty-fifth, he was executed on Tower Hill, where he died, at thirty-four years old, both courageously and penitently. His step-father suffered with him. His enemy, Sir Walter Raleigh, stood near the scaffold all the time—but not so near it as we shall see him stand, before we finish his history.

In this case, as in the cases of the Duke of Norfolk and Mary Queen of Scots, the Queen had commanded, and countermanded, and again commanded, the execution. It is probable that the death of her young and gallant favourite in the prime of his good qualities, was never off her mind afterwards, but she held out, the same vain obstinate and capricious woman, for another year. Then she danced before her Court on a state occasion—and cut, I should think, a mighty ridiculous figure, doing so in an immense ruff, stomacher and wig, at seventy years old. For another year still, she held out, but, without any more dancing, and as a moody sorrowful broken creature. At last, on the tenth of March, one thousand six hundred and three, having been ill of a very bad cold, and made worse by the death of the Countess of Nottingham, who was her intimate friend, she fell into a stupor and was supposed to be dead. She recovered her con-

sciousness, however, and then nothing would induce her to go to bed ; for she said that she knew that if she did, she should never get up again. There she lay for ten days, on cushions on the floor, without any food, until the Lord Admiral got her into bed at last, partly by persuasions and partly by main force. When they asked her who should succeed her, she replied that her seat had been the seat of Kings, and that she would have for her successor, "No rascal's son, but a King's." Upon this, the lords present stared at one another, and took the liberty of asking whom she meant ; to which she replied, "Whom should I mean, but our cousin of Scotland !" This was on the twenty-third of March. They asked her once again that day, after she was speechless, whether she was still in the same mind ? She struggled up in bed, and joined her hands over her head in the form of a crown, as the only reply she could make. At three o'clock next morning, she very quietly died, in the forty-fifth year of her reign.

That reign had been a glorious one, and is made for ever memorable by the distinguished men who flourished in it. Apart from the great voyagers, statesmen, and scholars, whom it produced, the names of BACON, SPENSER, and SHAKESPEARE, will always be remembered with pride and veneration by the civilised world, and will always impart (though with no great reason, perhaps) some portion of their lustre to the name of Elizabeth herself. It was a great reign for discovery, for commerce, and for English enterprise and spirit in general. It was a great reign for the Protestant religion and for the Reformation which made England free. The Queen was very popular, and in her progresses, or journeys about her dominions, was everywhere received with the liveliest joy. I think the truth is, that she was not half so good as she has been made out, and not half so bad as she has been made out. She had her fine qualities, but she was coarse, capricious, and treacherous, and had all the faults of an excessively vain young woman long after she was an old one. On the whole, she had a great deal too much of her father in her, to please me.

Many improvements and luxuries were introduced in the course of these five-and-forty years in the general manner of living ; but cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and bear-baiting, were still the national amusements ; and a coach was so rarely seen, and was such an ugly and cumbersome affair when it was seen, that even the Queen herself, on many high occasions, rode on horse-back on a pillion behind the Lord Chancellor.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ENGLAND UNDER JAMES THE FIRST.



OUR cousin of Scotland" was ugly, awkward, and shuffling both in mind and person. His tongue was much too large for his mouth, his legs were much too weak for his body, and his dull goggle-eyes stared and rolled like an idiot's. He was cunning, covetous, wasteful, idle, drunken, greedy, dirty, cowardly, a great swearer, and the most conceited man on earth. His figure—what is commonly called rickety from his birth—presented a most ridiculous appearance, dressed in thick padded clothes, as a safeguard against being stabbed (of which he lived in continual fear), of a grass-green colour from head to foot, with a hunting-horn dangling at his side instead of a sword, and his hat and feather sticking over one eye, or hanging on the back of his head, as he happened to toss it on. He used to loll on the necks of his favourite courtiers, and slobber their faces, and kiss and pinch their cheeks ; and the greatest favourite he ever had, used to sign himself in his letters to his royal master, His Majesty's "dog and slave," and used to address his majesty as "his Sowship." His majesty was the worst rider ever seen, and thought himself the best. He was one of the most impertinent talkers (in the broadest Scotch) ever heard, and boasted of being unanswerable in all manner of argument. He wrote some of the most wearisome treatises ever read—among others a book upon witchcraft, in which he was a devout believer—and thought himself a prodigy of authorship. He thought, and wrote, and said, that a king had a right to make and unmake what laws he pleased, and ought to be accountable to nobody on earth. This is the plain true character of the personage whom the greatest men about the court praised and flattered to that degree, that I doubt if there be anything much more shameful in the annals of human nature.

He came to the English throne with great ease. The miseries of a disputed succession had been felt so long, and so dreadfully, that he was proclaimed within a few hours of Elizabeth's death, and was accepted by the nation, even without being asked to give any pledge that he would govern well, or that he would redress crying grievances. He took a month to come from Edinburgh to London ; and, by way of exercising his new power, hanged a pickpocket on the journey without any trial, and knighted

everybody he could lay hold of. He made two hundred knights before he got to his palace in London, and seven hundred before he had been in it three months. He also shovelled sixty-two new peers into the House of Lords—and there was a pretty large sprinkling of Scotchmen among them, you may believe.

His Sowship's prime Minister, CECIL (for I cannot do better than call his majesty what his favourite called him), was the enemy of Sir Walter Raleigh, and also of Sir Walter's political friend, LORD COBHAM; and his Sowship's first trouble was a plot originated by these two, and entered into by some others, with the old object of seizing the King and keeping him in imprisonment until he should change his ministers. There were Catholic priests in the plot, and there were Puritan noblemen too; for, although the Catholics and Puritans were strongly opposed to each other, they united at this time against his Sowship, because they knew that he had a design against both, after pretending to be friendly to each; this design being to have only one high and convenient form of the Protestant religion, which everybody should be bound to belong to, whether they liked it or not. This plot was mixed up with another, which may or may not have had some reference to placing on the throne, at some time, the LADY ARABELLA STUART; whose misfortune it was, to be the daughter of the younger brother of his Sowship's father, but who was quite innocent of any part in the scheme. Sir Walter Raleigh was accused on the confession of Lord Cobham—a miserable creature, who said one thing at one time, and another thing at another time, and could be relied upon in nothing. The trial of Sir Walter Raleigh lasted from eight in the morning until nearly midnight; he defended himself with such eloquence, genius, and spirit against all accusations, and against the insults of COKE, the Attorney-General—who, according to the custom of the time, foully abused him—that those who went there detesting the prisoner, came away admiring him, and declaring that anything so wonderful and so captivating was never heard. He was found guilty, nevertheless, and sentenced to death. Execution was deferred, and he was taken to the Tower. The two Catholic priests, less fortunate, were executed with the usual atrocity; and Lord Cobham and two others were pardoned on the scaffold. His Sowship thought it wonderfully knowing in him to surprise the people by pardoning these three at the very block; but, blundering, and bungling, as usual, he had very nearly overreached himself. For, the messenger on horseback who brought

the pardon, came so late, that he was pushed to the outside of the crowd, and was obliged to shout and roar out what he came for. The miserable Cobham did not gain much by being spared that day. He lived, both as a prisoner and a beggar, utterly despised, and miserably poor, for thirteen years, and then died in an old outhouse belonging to one of his former servants.

This plot got rid of, and Sir Walter Raleigh safely shut up in the Tower, his Sowship held a great dispute with the Puritans on their presenting a petition to him, and had it all his own way—not so very wonderful, as he would talk continually, and would not hear anybody else—and filled the Bishops with admiration. It was comfortably settled that there was to be only one form of religion, and that all men were to think exactly alike. But, although this was arranged two centuries and a half ago, and although the arrangement was supported by much fining and imprisonment, I do not find that it is quite successful, even yet.

His Sowship, having that uncommonly high opinion of himself as a king, had a very low opinion of Parliament as a power that audaciously wanted to control him. When he called his first Parliament after he had been king a year, he accordingly thought he would take pretty high ground with them, and told them that he commanded them “as an absolute king.” The Parliament thought those strong words, and saw the necessity of upholding their authority. His Sowship had three children: Prince Henry, Prince Charles, and the Princess Elizabeth. It would have been well for one of these, and we shall too soon see which, if he had learnt a little wisdom concerning Parliaments from his father's obstinacy.

Now, the people still labouring under their old dread of the Catholic religion, this Parliament revived and strengthened the severe laws against it. And this so angered ROBERT CATESBY, a restless Catholic gentleman of an old family, that he formed one of the most desperate and terrible designs ever conceived in the mind of man; no less a scheme than the Gunpowder Plot.

His object was, when the king, lords, and commons, should be assembled at the next opening of Parliament, to blow them up, one and all, with a great mine of gunpowder. The first person to whom he confided this horrible idea was THOMAS WINTER, a Worcestershire gentleman who had served in the army abroad, and had been secretly employed in Catholic projects. While Winter was yet undecided, and

when he had gone over to the Netherlands, to learn from the Spanish Ambassador there whether there was any hope of Catholics being relieved through the intercession of the King of Spain with his Sowship, he found at Ostend a tall dark daring man, whom he had known when they were both soldiers abroad, and whose name was GUIDO—or GUY—FAWKES. Resolved to join the plot, he proposed it to this man, knowing him to be the man for any desperate deed, and they two came back to England together. Here, they admitted two other conspirators: THOMAS PERCY, related to the Earl of Northumberland, and JOHN WRIGHT, his brother-in-law. All these met together in a solitary house in the open fields which were then near Clement's Inn, now a closely blocked-up part of London; and when they had all taken a great oath of secrecy, Catesby told the rest what his plan was. They then went up-stairs into a garret, and received the sacrament from FATHER GERARD, a Jesuit, who is said not to have known actually of the Gunpowder Plot, but who, I think, must have had his suspicions that there was something desperate afoot.

Percy was a Gentleman Pensioner, and as he had occasional duties to perform about the Court, then kept at Whitehall, there would be nothing suspicious in his living at Westminster. So, having looked well about him, and having found a house to let, the back of which joined the Parliament House, he hired it of a person named FERRIS, for the purpose of undermining the wall. Having got possession of this house, the conspirators hired another on the Lambeth side of the Thames, which they used as a store-house for wood, gunpowder, and other combustible matters. These were to be removed at night (and afterwards were removed), bit by bit, to the house at Westminster; and, that there might be some trusty person to keep watch over the Lambeth stores, they admitted another conspirator, by name ROBERT KAY, a very poor Catholic gentleman.

All these arrangements had been made some months, and it was a dark wintry December night, when the conspirators, who had been in the meantime dispersed to avoid observation, met in the house at Westminster, and began to dig. They had laid in a good stock of eatables, to avoid going in and out, and they dug and dug with great ardour. But, the wall being tremendously thick, and the work very severe, they took into their plot CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT, a younger brother of John Wright, that they might have a new pair of hands to help. And Christopher Wright fell to like a fresh man, and they

dug and dug by night and by day, and Fawkes stood sentinel all the time. And if any man's heart seemed to fail him at all, Fawkes said, "Gentlemen, we have abundance of powder and shot here, and there is no fear of our being taken alive, even if discovered." The same Fawkes, who, in the capacity of sentinel, was always prowling about, soon picked up the intelligence that the King had prorogued the Parliament again, from the seventh of February, the day first fixed upon, until the third of October. When the conspirators knew this, they agreed to separate until after the Christmas holidays, and to take no notice of each other in the meanwhile, and never to write letters to one another on any account. So, the house in Westminster was shut up again, and I suppose the neighbours thought that those strange looking men who lived there so gloomily, and went out so seldom, were gone away to have a merry Christmas somewhere.

It was the beginning of February, sixteen hundred and five, when Catesby met his fellow-conspirators again at this Westminster house. He had now admitted three more; JOHN GRANT, a Warwickshire gentleman of a melancholy temper, who lived in a doleful house near Stratford-upon-Avon, with a frowning wall all round it, and a deep moat; ROBERT WINTER, eldest brother of Thomas; and Catesby's own servant, THOMAS BATES, who, Catesby thought, had had some suspicion of what his master was about. These three had all suffered more or less for their religion in Elizabeth's time. And now, they all began to dig again, and they dug and dug by night and by day.

They found it dismal work alone there, underground, with such a fearful secret on their minds, and so many murders before them. They were filled with wild fancies. Sometimes they thought they heard a great bell tolling, deep down in the earth under the Parliament House; sometimes, they thought they heard low voices muttering about the Gunpowder Plot; once in the morning, they really did hear a great rumbling noise over their heads, as they dug and sweated in their mine. Every man stopped and looked aghast at his neighbour, wondering what had happened, when that bold prowler, Fawkes, who had been out to look, came in and told them that it was only a dealer in coals who had occupied a cellar under the Parliament House, removing his stock in trade to some other place. Upon this, the conspirators, who with all their digging and digging had not yet dug through the tremendously thick wall, changed their plan; hired that cellar,

which was directly under the House of Lords; put six-and-thirty barrels of gunpowder in it, and covered them over with faggots and coals. Then they all dispersed again till September, when the following new conspirators were admitted; SIR EDWARD BAYNHAM, of Gloucestershire; SIR EVERARD DIGBY, of Rutlandshire; AMBROSE ROOKWOOD, of Suffolk; FRANCIS TRESHAM, of Northamptonshire. Most of these were rich, and were to assist the plot, some with money and some with horses on which the conspirators were to ride through the country and rouse the Catholics after the Parliament should be blown into air.

Parliament being again prorogued from the third of October to the fifth of November, and the conspirators being uneasy lest their design should have been found out, Thomas Winter said he would go up into the House of Lords on the day of the prorogation, and see how matters looked. Nothing could be better. The unconscious Commissioners were walking about and talking to one another, just over the six-and-thirty barrels of gunpowder. He came back and told the rest so, and they went on with their preparations. They hired a ship, and kept it ready in the Thames, in which Fawkes was to sail for Flanders after firing with a slow match the train that was to explode the powder. A number of Catholic gentlemen not in the secret, were invited, on pretence of a hunting party, to meet Sir Everard Digby at Dunchurch on the fatal day, that they might be ready to act together. And now all was ready.

But, now, the great wickedness and danger which had been all along at the bottom of this wicked plot, began to show itself. As the fifth of November drew near, most of the conspirators, remembering that they had friends and relations who would be in the House of Lords that day, felt some natural relenting, and a wish to warn them to keep away. They were not much comforted by Catesby's declaring that in such a cause he would blow up his own son. LORD MOUNTEAGLE, Tresham's brother-in-law, was certain to be in the house; and when Tresham found that he could not prevail upon the rest to devise any means of sparing their friends, he wrote a mysterious letter to this lord and left it at his lodging in the dusk, urging him to keep away from the opening of Parliament, "since God and man had concurred to punish the wickedness of the times." It contained the words "that the Parliament should receive a terrible blow, and yet should not see who hurt them." And it added, "the danger is past as soon as you have burnt the letter."

The ministers and courtiers made out that his Sowship, by a direct miracle from Heaven, found out what this letter meant. The truth is, that they were not long (as few men would be) in finding out for themselves; and it was decided to let the conspirators alone, until the very day before the opening of Parliament. That the conspirators had their fears, is certain; for Tresham himself said before them all, that they were every one dead men; and, although even he did not take flight, there is reason to suppose that he had warned other persons besides Lord Mounteagle. However, they were all firm; and Fawkes, who was a man of iron, went down every day and night to keep watch in the cellar as usual. He was there about two in the afternoon of the fourth, when the Lord Chamberlain and Lord Mounteagle threw open the door and looked in. "Who are you, friend?" said they. "Why," said Fawkes, "I am Mr. Percy's servant, and am looking after his store of fuel here." "Your master has laid in a pretty good store," they returned, and shut the door, and went away. Fawkes, upon this, posted off to the other conspirators to tell them all was quiet, and went back and shut himself up in the dark black cellar again, where he heard the bell go twelve o'clock and usher in the fifth of November. About two hours afterwards, he slowly opened the door, and came out to look about him, in his old prowling way. He was instantly seized and bound, by a party of soldiers under SIR THOMAS KNEVETT. He had a watch upon him, some touchwood, some tinder, some slow matches; and there was a dark lantern with a candle in it, lighted, behind the door. He had his boots and spurs on—to ride to the ship, I suppose—and it was well for the soldiers that they took him so suddenly. If they had left him but a moment's time to light a match, he certainly would have tossed it in among the powder, and blown up himself and them.

They took him to the King's bed-chamber first of all, and there the King (causing him to be held very tight, and keeping a good way off), asked him how he could have the heart to intend to destroy so many innocent people? "Because," said Guy Fawkes, "desperate diseases need desperate remedies." To a little Scotch favourite, with a face like a terrier, who asked him (with no particular wisdom) why he had collected so much gunpowder, he replied, because he had meant to blow Scotchmen back to Scotland, and it would take a deal of powder to do that. Next day he was carried to the Tower, but would make no confession. Even after being horribly tortured, he confessed nothing

that the Government did not already know; though he must have been in a fearful state—as his signature, still preserved, in contrast with his natural handwriting before he was put upon the dreadful rack, most frightfully shows. Bates, a very different man, soon said the Jesuits had had to do with the plot, and probably, under the torture, would as readily have said anything. Tresham, taken and put in the Tower too, made confessions and unmade them, and died of an illness that was heavy upon him. Rookwood, who had stationed relays of his own horses all the way to Dunchurch, did not mount to escape until the middle of the day, when the news of the plot was all over London. On the road he came up with the two Wrights, Catesby, and Percy; and they all galloped together into Northamptonshire. Thence to Dunchurch, where they found the proposed party assembled. Finding, however, that there had been a plot, and that it had been discovered, the party disappeared in the course of the night, and left them alone with Sir Everard Digby. Away they all rode again, through Warwickshire and Worcestershire, to a house called Holbeach, on the borders of Staffordshire. They tried to raise the Catholics on their way, but were indignantly driven off by them. All this time they were hotly pursued by the sheriff of Worcester, and a fast increasing concourse of riders. At last, resolving to defend themselves at Holbeach, they shut themselves up in the house, and put some wet powder before the fire to dry. But it blew up, and Catesby was singed and blackened, and almost killed, and some of the others were sadly hurt. Still, knowing that they must die, they resolved to die there, and with only their swords in their hands appeared at the windows to be shot at by the sheriff and his assistants. Catesby said to Thomas Winter, after Thomas had been hit in the right arm which dropped powerless by his side, “Stand by me, Tom, and we will die together!” which they did, being shot through the body by two bullets from one gun. John Wright, and Christopher Wright, and Percy, were also shot. Rookwood and Digby were taken: the former with a broken arm and a wound in his body too.

It was the fifteenth of January, before the trial of Guy Fawkes, and such of the other conspirators as were left alive, came on. They were all found guilty, all hanged, drawn, and quartered: some, in St. Paul’s Churchyard, on the top of Ludgate-hill; some, before the Parliament House. A Jesuit priest, named HENRY GARNET, to whom the dreadful design was said to have been communicated, was taken and tried; and

two of his servants, as well as a poor priest who was taken with him, were tortured without mercy. He himself was not tortured, but was surrounded in the Tower by tamperers and traitors, and so was made unfairly to convict himself out of his own mouth. He said, upon his trial, that he had done all he could to prevent the deed, and that he could not make public what had been told him in confession—though I am afraid he knew of the plot in other ways. He was found guilty and executed, after a manful defence, and the Catholic Church made a saint of him; some rich and powerful persons, who had had nothing to do with the project, were fined and imprisoned for it by the Star Chamber; the Catholics, in general, who had recoiled with horror from the idea of the infernal contrivance, were unjustly put under more severe laws than before; and this was the end of the Gunpowder Plot.

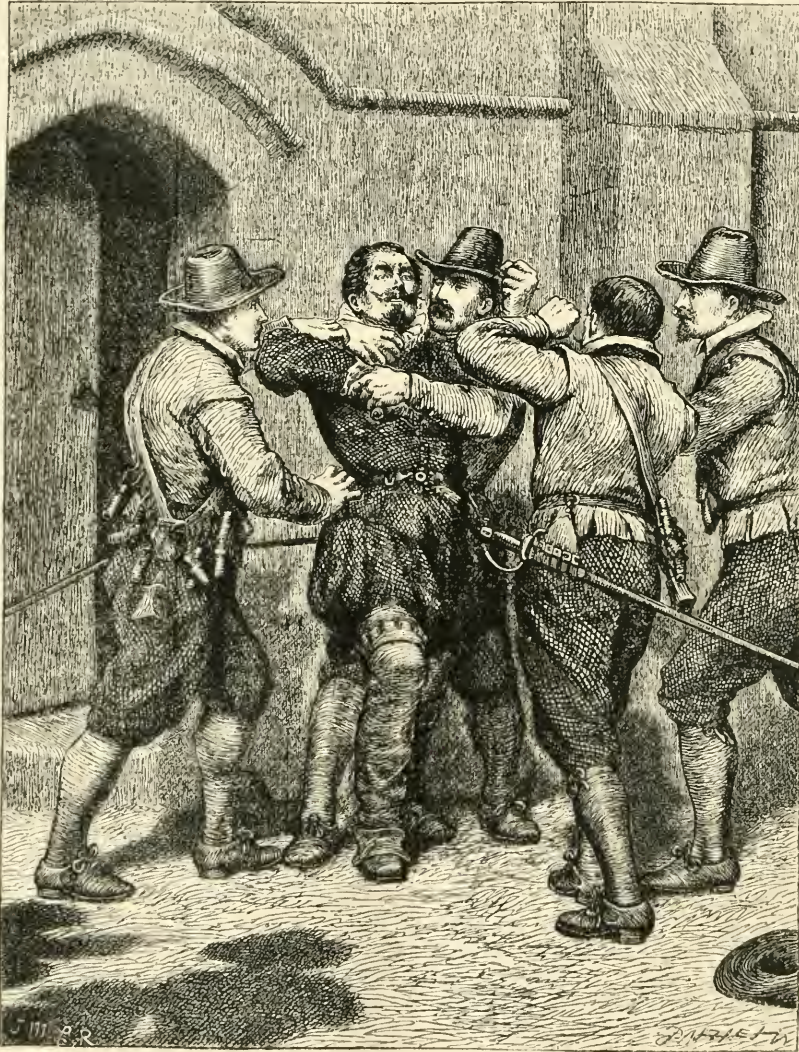
SECOND PART.

HIS Sowship would pretty willingly, I think, have blown the House of Commons into the air himself; for his dread and jealousy of it knew no bounds all through his reign. When he was hard pressed for money he was obliged to order it to meet, as he could get no money without it; and when it asked him first to abolish some of the monopolies in necessaries of life, which were a great grievance to the people, and to redress other public wrongs, he flew into a rage and got rid of it again. At one time he wanted it to consent to the Union of England with Scotland, and quarrelled about that. At another time it wanted him to put down a most infamous Church abuse, called the High Commission Court, and he quarrelled with it about that. At another time it entreated him not to be quite so fond of his archbishops and bishops who made speeches in his praise too awful to be related, but to have some little consideration for the poor Puritan clergy who were persecuted for preaching in their own way, and not according to the archbishops and bishops; and they quarrelled about that. In short, what with hating the House of Commons, and pretending not to hate it; and what with now sending some of its members who opposed him, to Newgate or to the Tower, and now telling the rest that they must not presume to make speeches about the public affairs which could not possibly concern them; and what with cajoling, and bullying, and frightening, and being frightened; the House of Commons was the plague of his Sowship’s existence. It was pretty firm, however, in maintaining its

rights, and insisting that the Parliament should make the laws, and not the King by his own single proclamations (which he tried hard to do); and his Sowship was so often distressed for money, in consequence, that he sold every sort of title and public office as if they were mer-

chandise, and even invented a new dignity called a Baronetcy, which anybody could buy for a thousand pounds.

These disputes with his Parliaments, and his hunting, and his drinking, and his lying in bed—for he was a great sluggard—occupied his



THE SEIZURE OF GUY FAWKES.

Sowship pretty well. The rest of his time he chiefly passed in hugging and slobbering his favourites. The first of these was SIR PHILIP HERBERT, who had no knowledge whatever, except of dogs, and horses, and hunting, but whom he soon made EARL OF MONTGOMERY.

The next, and a much more famous one, was ROBERT CARR, or KER (for it is not certain which was his right name), who came from the Border country, and whom he soon made VISCOUNT ROCHESTER, and afterwards, EARL OF SOMERSET. The way in which his Sowship

doted on this handsome young man, is even more odious to think of, than the way in which the really great men of England condescended to bow down before him. The favourite's great friend was a certain SIR THOMAS OVERBURY, who wrote his love-letters for him, and assisted him in the duties of his many high places, which his own ignorance prevented him from discharging. But this same Sir Thomas having just manhood enough to dissuade the favourite from a wicked marriage with the beautiful Countess of Essex, who was to get a divorce from her husband for the purpose, the said Countess, in her rage, got Sir Thomas put into the Tower, and there poisoned him. Then the favourite and this bad woman were publicly married by the King's pet bishop, with as much to-do and rejoicing, as if he had been the best man, and she the best woman, upon the face of the earth.

But, after a longer sunshine than might have been expected—of seven years or so, that is to say—another handsome young man started up and eclipsed the EARL OF SOMERSET. This was GEORGE VILLIERS, the youngest son of a Leicestershire gentleman: who came to Court with all the Paris fashions on him, and could dance as well as the best mountebank that ever was seen. He soon danced himself into the good graces of his Sowship, and danced the other favourite out of favour. Then, it was all at once discovered that the Earl and Countess of Somerset had not deserved all those great promotions and mighty rejoicings, and they were separately tried for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, and for other crimes. But, the King was so afraid of his late favourite's publicly telling some disgraceful things he knew of him—which he darkly threatened to do—that he was even examined with two men standing, one on either side of him, each with a cloak in his hand, ready to throw it over his head and stop his mouth if he should break out with what he had it in his power to tell. So, a very lame affair was purposely made of the trial, and his punishment was an allowance of four thousand pounds a year in retirement, while the Countess was pardoned, and allowed to pass into retirement too. They hated one another by this time, and lived to revile and torment each other some years.

While these events were in progress, and while his Sowship was making such an exhibition of himself, from day to day and from year to year, as is not often seen in any sty, three remarkable deaths took place in England. The first was that of the Minister, Robert Cecil,

Earl of Salisbury, who was past sixty, and had never been strong, being deformed from his birth. He said at last that he had no wish to live; and no Minister need have had, with his experience of the meanness and wickedness of those disgraceful times. The second was that of the Lady Arabella Stuart, who alarmed his Sowship mightily, by privately marrying WILLIAM SEYMOUR, son of LORD BEAUCHAMP, who was a descendant of King Henry the Seventh, and who, his Sowship thought, might consequently increase and strengthen any claim she might one day set up to the throne. She was separated from her husband (who was put in the Tower) and thrust into a boat to be confined at Durham. She escaped in a man's dress to get away in a French ship from Gravesend to France, but unhappily missed her husband, who had escaped too, and was soon taken. She went raving mad in the miserable Tower, and died there after four years. The last, and the most important of these three deaths, was that of Prince Henry, the heir to the throne, in the nineteenth year of his age. He was a promising young prince, and greatly liked; a quiet well-conducted youth, of whom two very good things are known: first, that his father was jealous of him; secondly, that he was the friend of Sir Walter Raleigh, languishing through all those years in the Tower, and often said that no man but his father would keep such a bird in such a cage. On the occasion of the preparations for the marriage of his sister the Princess Elizabeth with a foreign prince (and an unhappy marriage it turned out), he came from Richmond, where he had been very ill, to greet his new brother-in-law, at the palace at Whitehall. There he played a great game at tennis, in his shirt, though it was very cold weather, and was seized with an alarming illness, and died within a fortnight of a putrid fever. For this young prince Sir Walter Raleigh wrote, in his prison in the Tower, the beginning of a *History of the World*: a wonderful instance how little his Sowship could do to confine a great man's mind, however long he might imprison his body.

And this mention of Sir Walter Raleigh, who had many faults, but who never showed so many merits as in trouble and adversity, may bring me at once to the end of his sad story. After an imprisonment in the Tower of twelve long years, he proposed to resume those old sea voyages of his, and to go to South America in search of gold. His Sowship, divided between his wish to be on good terms with the Spaniards through whose territory Sir Walter

must pass (he had long had an idea of marrying Prince Henry to a Spanish Princess), and his avaricious eagerness to get hold of the gold, did not know what to do. But, in the end, he set Sir Walter free, taking securities for his return; and Sir Walter fitted out an expedition at his own cost, and, on the twenty-eighth of March, one thousand six hundred and seventeen, sailed away in command of one of its ships, which he ominously called the *Destiny*. The expedition failed; the common men, not finding the gold they had expected, mutinied; a quarrel broke out between Sir Walter and the Spaniards, who hated him for old successes of his against them; and he took and burnt a little town called *SAINT THOMAS*. For this he was denounced to his Sowship by the Spanish Ambassador as a pirate; and returning almost broken-hearted, with his hopes and fortunes shattered, his company of friends dispersed, and his brave son (who had been one of them) killed, he was taken—through the treachery of *SIR LEWIS STUKELY*, his near relation, a scoundrel and a Vice-Admiral—and was once again immured in his prison-home of so many years.

His Sowship being mightily disappointed in not getting any gold, Sir Walter Raleigh was tried as unfairly, and with as many lies and evasions as the judges and law officers and every other authority in Church and State habitually practised under such a King. After a great deal of prevarication on all parts but his own, it was declared that he must die under his former sentence, now fifteen years old. So, on the twenty-eighth of October, one thousand six hundred and eighteen, he was shut up in the Gate House at Westminster to pass his last night on earth, and there he took leave of his good and faithful lady who was worthy to have lived in better days. At eight o'clock next morning, after a cheerful breakfast, and a pipe, and a cup of good wine, he was taken to Old Palace Yard in Westminster, where the scaffold was set up, and where so many people of high degree were assembled to see him die, that it was a matter of some difficulty to get him through the crowd. He behaved most nobly, but if anything lay heavy on his mind, it was that Earl of Essex, whose head he had seen roll off; and he solemnly said that he had had no hand in bringing him to the block, and that he had shed tears for him when he died. As the morning was very cold, the Sheriff said, would he come down to a fire for a little space, and warm himself? But Sir Walter thanked him, and said no, he would rather it were done at once, for he was ill of fever and ague, and in

another quarter of an hour his shaking fit would come upon him if he were still alive, and his enemies might then suppose that he trembled for fear. With that, he kneeled and made a very beautiful and Christian prayer. Before he laid his head upon the block he felt the edge of the axe, and said, with a smile upon his face, that it was a sharp medicine, but would cure the worst disease. When he was bent down ready for death, he said to the executioner, finding that he hesitated, "What dost thou fear? Strike, man!" So, the axe came down and struck his head off, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

The new favourite got on fast. He was made a viscount, he was made Duke of Buckingham, he was made a marquis, he was made Master of the Horse, he was made Lord High Admiral—and the Chief Commander of the gallant English forces that had dispersed the Spanish Armada, was displaced to make room for him. He had the whole kingdom at his disposal, and his mother sold all the profits and honours of the State, as if she had kept a shop. He blazed all over with diamonds and other precious stones, from his hatbands and his earrings to his shoes. Yet he was an ignorant presumptuous swaggering compound of knave and fool, with nothing but his beauty and his dancing to recommend him. This is the gentleman who called himself his Majesty's dog and slave, and called his Majesty Your Sowship. His Sowship called him *STEENIE*; it is supposed, because that was a nickname for Stephen, and because St. Stephen was generally represented in pictures as a handsome saint.

His Sowship was driven sometimes to his wits' end by his trimming between the general dislike of the Catholic religion at home, and his desire to wheedle and flatter it abroad, as his only means of getting a rich princess for his son's wife: a part of whose fortune he might cram into his greasy pockets. Prince Charles—or as his Sowship called him, *Baby Charles*—being now *PRINCE OF WALES*, the old project of a marriage with the Spanish King's daughter had been revived for him; and as she could not marry a Protestant without leave from the Pope, his Sowship himself secretly and meanly wrote to his Infallibility, asking for it. The negotiation for this Spanish marriage takes up a larger space in great books, than you can imagine, but the upshot of it all is, that when it had been held off by the Spanish Court for a long time, *Baby Charles* and *Steenie* set off in disguise as Mr. Thomas Smith and Mr. John Smith, to see the Spanish Princess; that *Baby Charles* pretended to be desperately in love with her,

and jumped off walls to look at her, and made a considerable fool of himself in a good many ways; that she was called Princess of Wales, and that the whole Spanish Court believed Baby Charles to be all but dying for her sake, as he expressly told them he was; that Baby Charles and Steenie came back to England, and were received with as much rapture as if they had been a blessing to it; that Baby Charles had actually fallen in love with HENRIETTA MARIA, the French King's sister, whom he had seen in Paris; that he thought it a wonderfully fine and princely thing to have deceived the Spaniards, all through; and that he openly said, with a chuckle, as soon as he was safe and sound at home again, that the Spaniards were great fools to have believed him.

Like most dishonest men, the Prince and the favourite complained that the people whom they had deluded were dishonest. They made such misrepresentations of the treachery of the Spaniards in this business of the Spanish match, that the English nation became eager for a war with them. Although the gravest Spaniards laughed at the idea of his Sowship in a warlike attitude, the Parliament granted money for the beginning of hostilities, and the treaties with Spain were publicly declared to be at an end. The Spanish ambassador in London—probably with the help of the fallen favourite, the Earl of Somerset—being unable to obtain speech with his Sowship, slipped a paper into his hand, declaring that he was a prisoner in his own house, and was entirely governed by Buckingham and his creatures. The first effect of this letter was that his Sowship began to cry and whine, and took Baby Charles away from Steenie, and went down to Windsor, gabbling all sorts of nonsense. The end of it was that his Sowship hugged his dog and slave, and said he was quite satisfied.

He had given the Prince and the favourite almost unlimited power to settle anything with the Pope as to the Spanish marriage; and he now, with a view to the French one, signed a treaty that all Roman Catholics in England should exercise their religion freely, and should never be required to take any oath contrary thereto. In return for this, and for other concessions much less to be defended, Henrietta Maria was to become the Prince's wife, and was to bring him a fortune of eight hundred thousand crowns.

His Sowship's eyes were getting red with eagerly looking for the money, when the end of a gluttonous life came upon him; and, after a fortnight's illness, on Sunday the twenty-seventh of March, one thousand six hundred and twenty-

five, he died. He had reigned twenty-two years, and was fifty-nine years old. I know of nothing more abominable in history than the adulation that was lavished on this King, and the vice and corruption that such a barefaced habit of lying produced in his court. It is much to be doubted whether one man of honour, and not utterly self-disgraced, kept his place near James the First. Lord Bacon, that able and wise philosopher, as the First Judge in the Kingdom in this reign, became a public spectacle of dishonesty and corruption; and in his base flattery of his Sowship, and in his crawling servility to his dog and slave, disgraced himself even more. But, a creature like his Sowship set upon a throne is like the Plague, and everybody receives infection from him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ENGLAND UNDER CHARLES THE FIRST.

BABY CHARLES became KING CHARLES THE FIRST, in the twenty-fifth year of his age. Unlike his father, he was usually amiable in his private character, and grave and dignified in his bearing; but, like his father, he had monstrously exaggerated notions of the rights of a king, and was evasive, and not to be trusted. If his word could have been relied upon, his history might have had a different end.

His first care was to send over that insolent upstart, Buckingham, to bring Henrietta Maria from Paris to be his Queen; upon which occasion Buckingham—with his usual audacity—made love to the young Queen of Austria, and was very indignant indeed with CARDINAL RICHELIEU, the French Minister, for thwarting his intentions. The English people were very well disposed to like their new Queen, and to receive her with great favour when she came among them as a stranger. But, she held the Protestant religion in great dislike, and brought over a crowd of unpleasant priests, who made her do some very ridiculous things, and forced themselves upon the public notice in many disagreeable ways. Hence, the people soon came to dislike her, and she soon came to dislike them; and she did so much all through this reign in setting the King (who was dotingly fond of her) against his subjects, that it would have been better for him if she had never been born.

Now, you are to understand that King Charles the First—of his own determination to be a high

and mighty King not to be called to account by anybody, and urged on by his Queen besides—deliberately set himself to put his Parliament down and to put himself up. You are also to understand, that even in pursuit of this wrong idea (enough in itself to have ruined any king) he never took a straight course, but always took a crooked one.

He was bent upon war with Spain, though neither the House of Commons nor the people were quite clear as to the justice of that war, now that they began to think a little more about the story of the Spanish match. But the King rushed into it hotly, raised money by illegal means to meet its expenses, and encountered a miserable failure at Cadiz, in the very first year of his reign. An expedition to Cadiz had been made in the hope of plunder, but as it was not successful, it was necessary to get a grant of money from the Parliament; and when they met, in no very complying humour, the King told them, "to make haste to let him have it, or it would be the worse for themselves." Not put in a more complying humour by this, they impeached the King's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, as the cause (which he undoubtedly was) of many great public grievances and wrongs. The King, to save him, dissolved the Parliament without getting the money he wanted; and when the Lords implored him to consider and grant a little delay, he replied, "No, not one minute." He then began to raise money for himself by the following means among others.

He levied certain duties called tonnage and poundage which had not been granted by the Parliament, and could lawfully be levied by no other power; he called upon the seaport towns to furnish, and to pay all the cost for three months of, a fleet of armed ships; and he required the people to unite in lending him large sums of money, the repayment of which was very doubtful. If the poor people refused, they were pressed as soldiers or sailors; if the gentry refused, they were sent to prison. Five gentlemen, named SIR THOMAS DARNEL, JOHN CORBET, WALTER EARL, JOHN HEVENINGHAM, and EVERARD HAMPDEN, for refusing were taken up by a warrant of the King's privy council, and were sent to prison without any cause but the King's pleasure being stated for their imprisonment. Then the question came to be solemnly tried, whether this was not a violation of Magna Charta, and an encroachment by the King on the highest rights of the English people. His lawyers contended No, because to encroach upon the rights of the English people would be to do wrong, and the King could do no wrong.

The accommodating judges decided in favour of this wicked nonsense; and here was a fatal division between the King and the people.

For all this, it became necessary to call another Parliament. The people, sensible of the danger in which their liberties were, chose for it those who were best known for their determined opposition to the King; but still the King, quite blinded by his determination to carry everything before him, addressed them when they met, in a contemptuous manner, and just told them in so many words that he had only called them together because he wanted money. The Parliament, strong enough and resolute enough to know that they would lower his tone, cared little for what he said, and laid before him one of the great documents of history, which is called the PETITION OF RIGHT, requiring that the free men of England should no longer be called upon to lend the King money, and should no longer be pressed or imprisoned for refusing to do so; further, that the free men of England should no longer be seized by the King's special mandate or warrant, it being contrary to their rights and liberties and the laws of their country. At first the King returned an answer to this petition, in which he tried to shirk it altogether; but, the House of Commons then showing their determination to go on with the impeachment of Buckingham the King in alarm returned an answer, giving his consent to all that was required of him. He not only afterwards departed from his word and honour on these points, over and over again, but, at this very time, he did the mean and dissembling act of publishing his first answer and not his second—merely that the people might suppose that the Parliament had not got the better of him.

That pestilent Buckingham, to gratify his own wounded vanity, had by this time involved the country in war with France, as well as with Spain. For such miserable causes and such miserable creatures are wars sometimes made! But he was destined to do little more mischief in this world. One morning, as he was going out of his house to his carriage, he turned to speak to a certain Colonel FRYER who was with him; and he was violently stabbed with a knife, which the murderer left sticking in his heart. This happened in his hall. He had had angry words up-stairs, just before, with some French gentlemen, who were immediately suspected by his servants, and had a close escape from being set upon and killed. In the midst of the noise, the real murderer, who had gone to the kitchen and might easily have got away, drew his sword and cried out, "I am the man!" His name

was JOHN FELTON, a Protestant and a retired officer in the army. He said he had had no personal ill-will to the Duke, but had killed him as a curse to the country. He had aimed his blow well, for Buckingham had only had time to cry out, "Villain!" and then he drew out the knife, fell against a table, and died.

The council made a mighty business of examining John Felton about this murder, though it was a plain case enough, one would think. He had come seventy miles to do it, he told them, and he did it for the reason he had declared; if they put him upon the rack, as that noble MARQUIS OF DORSET whom he saw before him, had the goodness to threaten, he gave that marquis warning, that he would accuse *him* as his accomplice! The King was unpleasantly anxious to have him racked, nevertheless; but as the judges now found out that torture was contrary to the law of England—it is a pity they did not make the discovery a little sooner—John Felton was simply executed for the murder he had done. A murder it undoubtedly was, and not in the least to be defended: though he had freed England from one of the most profligate, contemptible, and base court favourites to whom it has ever yielded.

A very different man now arose. This was SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH, a Yorkshire gentleman, who had sat in Parliament for a long time, and who had favoured arbitrary and haughty principles, but who had gone over to the people's side on receiving offence from Buckingham. The King, much wanting such a man—for, besides being naturally favourable to the King's cause, he had great abilities—made him first a Baron, and then a Viscount, and gave him high employment, and won him most completely.

A Parliament, however, was still in existence, and was *not* to be won. On the twentieth of January, one thousand six hundred and twenty-nine, SIR JOHN ELIOT, a great man who had been active in the Petition of Right, brought forward other strong resolutions against the King's chief instruments, and called upon the Speaker to put them to the vote. To this the Speaker answered, "he was commanded otherwise by the King," and got up to leave the chair—which, according to the rules of the House of Commons would have obliged it to adjourn without doing anything more—when two members, named Mr. HOLLIS and Mr. VALENTINE, held him down. A scene of great confusion arose among the members; and while many swords were drawn and flashing about, the King, who was kept informed of all that was going on, told the captain of his guard to go

down to the House and force the doors. The resolutions were by that time, however, voted, and the House adjourned. Sir John Eliot and those two members who had held the Speaker down, were quickly summoned before the council. As they claimed it to be their privilege not to answer out of Parliament for anything they had said in it, they were committed to the Tower. The King then went down and dissolved the Parliament, in a speech wherein he made mention of these gentlemen as "Vipers"—which did not do him much good that ever I have heard of.

As they refused to gain their liberty by saying they were sorry for what they had done, the King, always remarkably unforgiving, never overlooked their offence. When they demanded to be brought up before the Court of King's Bench, he even resorted to the meanness of having them moved about from prison to prison, so that the writs issued for that purpose should not legally find them. At last they came before the court and were sentenced to heavy fines, and to be imprisoned during the King's pleasure. When Sir John Eliot's health had quite given way, and he so longed for change of air and scene as to petition for his release, the King sent back the answer (worthy of his Sowship himself) that the petition was not humble enough. When he sent another petition by his young son, in which he pathetically offered to go back to prison when his health was restored, if he might be released for its recovery, the King still disregarded it. When he died in the Tower, and his children petitioned to be allowed to take his body down to Cornwall, there to lay it among the ashes of his forefathers, the King returned for answer, "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the church of that parish where he died." All this was like a very little King indeed, I think.

And now, for twelve long years, steadily pursuing his design of setting himself up and putting the people down, the King called no Parliament; but ruled without one. If twelve thousand volumes were written in his praise (as a good many have been) it would still remain a fact, impossible to be denied, that for twelve years King Charles the First reigned in England unlawfully and despotically, seized upon his subjects' goods and money at his pleasure, and punished according to his unbridled will all who ventured to oppose him. It is a fashion with some people to think that this King's career was cut short; but I must say myself that I think he ran a pretty long one.

WILLIAM LAUD, Archbishop of Canterbury, was the King's right-hand man in the religious

part of the putting down of the people's liberties. Laud, who was a sincere man, of large learning but small sense—for the two things sometimes go together in very different quantities—though a Protestant, held opinions so near those of the Catholics, that the Pope wanted to make a Cardinal of him, if he would have accepted that favour. He looked upon vows, robes, lighted candles, images, and so forth, as amazingly important in religious ceremonies; and he brought in an immensity of bowing and candle-snuffing. He also regarded archbishops and bishops as a sort of miraculous persons, and was inveterate in the last degree against any who thought otherwise. Accordingly, he offered up thanks to Heaven, and was in a state of much pious pleasure, when a Scotch clergyman named LEIGHTON, was pilloried, whipped, branded in the cheek, and had one of his ears cut off and one of his nostrils slit, for calling bishops trumpery and the inventions of men. He originated on a Sunday morning the prosecution of WILLIAM PRYNNE, a barrister who was of similar opinions, and who was fined a thousand pounds; who was pilloried; who had his ears cut off on two occasions—one ear at a time—and who was imprisoned for life. He highly approved of the punishment of DOCTOR BASTWICK, a physician; who was also fined a thousand pounds; and who afterwards had *his* ears cut off, and was imprisoned for life. These were gentle methods of persuasion, some will tell you; I think, they were rather calculated to be alarming to the people.

In the money part of the putting down of the people's liberties, the King was equally gentle, as some will tell you: as I think, equally alarming. He levied those duties of tonnage and poundage, and increased them as he thought fit. He granted monopolies to companies of merchants on their paying him for them, notwithstanding the great complaints that had, for years and years, been made on the subject of monopolies. He fined the people for disobeying proclamations issued by his Sowship in direct violation of law. He revived the detested Forest laws, and took private property to himself as his forest right. Above all, he determined to have what was called Ship Money; that is to say, money for the support of the fleet—not only from the seaports, but from all the counties of England: having found out that, in some ancient time or other, all the counties paid it. The grievance of this ship money being somewhat too strong, JOHN CHAMBERS, a citizen of London, refused to pay his part of it. For this the Lord Mayor ordered John Chambers to prison, and

for that John Chambers brought a suit against the Lord Mayor. LORD SAY, also, behaved like a real nobleman, and declared he would not pay. But, the sturdiest and best opponent of the ship money was JOHN HAMPDEN, a gentleman of Buckinghamshire, who had sat among the "vipers" in the House of Commons when there was such a thing, and who had been the bosom friend of Sir John Eliot. This case was tried before the twelve judges in the Court of Exchequer, and again the King's lawyers said it was impossible that ship money could be wrong, because the King could do no wrong, however hard he tried—and he really did try very hard during these twelve years. Seven of the judges said that was quite true, and Mr. Hampden was bound to pay: five of the judges said that was quite false, and Mr. Hampden was not bound to pay. So, the King triumphed (as he thought), by making Hampden the most popular man in England; where matters were getting to that height now, that many honest Englishmen could not endure their country, and sailed away across the seas to found a colony in Massachusetts Bay in America. It is said that Hampden himself and his relation OLIVER CROMWELL were going with a company of such voyagers, and were actually on board ship, when they were stopped by a proclamation, prohibiting sea captains to carry out such passengers without the royal license. But O! it would have been well for the King if he had let them go!

This was the state of England. If Laud had been a madman just broke loose, he could not have done more mischief than he did in Scotland. In his endeavours (in which he was seconded by the King, then in person in that part of his dominions) to force his own ideas of bishops, and his own religious forms and ceremonies, upon the Scotch, he roused that nation to a perfect frenzy. They formed a solemn league, which they called The Covenant, for the preservation of their own religious forms; they rose in arms throughout the whole country; they summoned all their men to prayers and sermons twice a day by beat of drum; they sang psalms, in which they compared their enemies to all the evil spirits that ever were heard of; and they solemnly vowed to smite them with the sword. At first the King tried force, then treaty, then a Scottish Parliament which did not answer at all. Then he tried the EARL OF STRAFFORD, formerly Sir Thomas Wentworth; who, as LORD WENTWORTH, had been governing Ireland. He, too, had carried it with a very high hand there, though to the benefit and prosperity of that country.

Strafford and Laud were for conquering the Scottish people by force of arms. Other lords who were taken into council, recommended that a Parliament should at last be called; to which the King unwillingly consented. So, on the thirteenth of April, one thousand six hundred and forty, that then strange sight, a Parliament, was seen at Westminster. It is called the Short Parliament, for it lasted a very little while. While the members were all looking at one another, doubtful who would dare to speak, MR. PYM arose and set forth all that the King had done unlawfully during the past twelve years, and what was the position to which England was reduced. This great example set, other members took courage and spoke the truth freely, though with great patience and moderation. The King, a little frightened, sent to say that if they would grant him a certain sum on certain terms, no more ship money should be raised. They debated the matter for two days; and then, as they would not give him all he asked without promise or inquiry, he dissolved them.

But they knew very well that he must have a Parliament now; and he began to make that discovery too, though rather late in the day. Wherefore, on the twenty-fourth of September, being then at York with an army collected against the Scottish people, but his own men sullen and discontented like the rest of the nation, the King told the great council of the Lords, whom he had called to meet him there, that he would summon another Parliament to assemble on the third of November. The soldiers of the Covenant had now forced their way into England and had taken possession of the northern counties, where the coals are got. As it would never do to be without coals, and as the King's troops could make no head against the Covenanters so full of gloomy zeal, a truce was made, and a treaty with Scotland was taken into consideration. Meanwhile the northern counties paid the Covenanters to leave the coals alone, and keep quiet.

We have now disposed of the Short Parliament. We have next to see what memorable things were done by the Long one.

SECOND PART.

THE Long Parliament assembled on the third of November, one thousand six hundred and forty. On that day week the Earl of Strafford arrived from York, very sensible that the spirited and determined men who formed that Parliament were no friends towards him, who had not

only deserted the cause of the people, but who had on all occasions opposed himself to their liberties. The King told him, for his comfort, that the Parliament "should not hurt one hair of his head." But, on the very next day Mr. Pym, in the House of Commons, and with great solemnity, impeached the Earl of Strafford as a traitor. He was immediately taken into custody and fell from his proud height.

It was the twenty-second of March before he was brought to trial in Westminster Hall; where, although he was very ill and suffered great pain, he defended himself with such ability and majesty, that it was doubtful whether he would not get the best of it. But on the thirteenth day of the trial, Pym produced in the House of Commons a copy of some notes of a council, found by young SIR HARRY VANE in a red velvet cabinet belonging to his father (Secretary Vane, who sat at the council-table with the Earl), in which Strafford had distinctly told the King that he was free from all rules and obligations of government, and might do with his people whatever he liked; and in which he had added—"You have an army in Ireland that you may employ to reduce this kingdom to obedience." It was not clear whether by the words "this kingdom," he had really meant England or Scotland; but the Parliament contended that he meant England, and this was treason. At the same sitting of the House of Commons it was resolved to bring in a bill of attainder declaring the treason to have been committed: in preference to proceeding with the trial by impeachment, which would have required the treason to be proved.

So, a bill was brought in at once, was carried through the House of Commons by a large majority, and was sent up to the House of Lords. While it was still uncertain whether the House of Lords would pass it and the King consent to it, Pym disclosed to the House of Commons that the King and Queen had both been plotting with the officers of the army to bring up the soldiers and control the Parliament, and also to introduce two hundred soldiers into the Tower of London to effect the Earl's escape. The plotting with the army was revealed by one GEORGE GORING, the son of a lord of that name: a bad fellow who was one of the original plotters, and turned traitor. The King had actually given his warrant for the admission of the two hundred men into the Tower, and they would have got in too, but for the refusal of the governor—a sturdy Scotchman of the name of BALFOUR—to admit them. These matters being made public, great numbers of people began to riot outside the Houses of Par-

liament, and to cry out for the execution of the Earl of Strafford, as one of the King's chief instruments against them. The bill passed the House of Lords while the people were in this state of agitation, and was laid before the King for his assent, together with another bill declaring that the Parliament then assembled should not be dissolved or adjourned without their own consent. The King—not unwilling to save a faithful servant, though he had no great attachment for him—was in some doubt what to do; but he gave his consent to both bills, although he in his heart believed that the bill against the Earl of Strafford was unlawful and unjust. The Earl had written to him, telling him that he was willing to die for his sake. But he had not expected that his royal master would take him at his word quite so readily; for, when he heard his doom, he laid his hand upon his heart, and said, "Put not your trust in Princes!"

The King, who never could be straightforward and plain, through one single day or through one single sheet of paper, wrote a letter to the Lords, and sent it by the young Prince of Wales, entreating them to prevail with the Commons that "that unfortunate man should fulfil the natural course of his life in a close imprisonment." In a postscript to the very same letter, he added, "If he must die, it were charity to relieve him till Saturday." If there had been any doubt of his fate, this weakness and meanness would have settled it. The very next day, which was the twelfth of May, he was brought out to be beheaded on Tower Hill.

Archbishop Laud, who had been so fond of having people's ears cropped off and their noses slit, was now confined in the Tower too; and when the Earl went by his window to his death, he was there, at his request, to give him his blessing. They had been great friends in the King's cause, and the Earl had written to him in the days of their power that he thought it would be an admirable thing to have Mr. Hampden publicly whipped for refusing to pay the ship money. However, those high and mighty doings were over now, and the Earl went his way to death with dignity and heroism. The Governor wished him to get into a coach at the Tower gate, for fear the people should tear him to pieces; but he said it was all one to him whether he died by the axe or by the people's hands. So, he walked, with a firm tread and a stately look, and sometimes pulled off his hat to them as he passed along. They were profoundly quiet. He made a speech on the scaffold from some notes he had prepared (the paper was found lying there after his head was struck off),

and one blow of the axe killed him, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

This bold and daring act, the Parliament accompanied by other famous measures, all originating (as even this did) in the King's having so grossly and so long abused his power. The name of DELINQUENTS was applied to all sheriffs and other officers who had been concerned in raising the ship money, or any other money, from the people, in an unlawful manner; the Hampden judgment was reversed; the judges who had decided against Hampden were called upon to give large securities that they would take such consequences as Parliament might impose upon them; and one was arrested as he sat in High Court, and carried off to prison. Laud was impeached; the unfortunate victims whose ears had been cropped and whose noses had been slit, were brought out of prison in triumph; and a bill was passed declaring that a Parliament should be called every third year, and that if the King and the King's officers did not call it, the people should assemble of themselves and summon it, as of their own right and power. Great illuminations and rejoicings took place over all these things, and the country was wildly excited. That the Parliament took advantage of this excitement and stirred them up by every means, there is no doubt; but you are always to remember those twelve long years, during which the King had tried so hard whether he really could do any wrong or not.

All this time there was a great religious outcry against the right of the Bishops to sit in Parliament; to which the Scottish people particularly objected. The English were divided on this subject, and, partly on this account and partly because they had had foolish expectations that the Parliament would be able to take off nearly all the taxes, numbers of them sometimes wavered and inclined towards the King.

I believe myself, that if, at this or almost any other period of his life, the King could have been trusted by any man not out of his senses, he might have saved himself and kept his throne. But, on the English army being disbanded, he plotted with the officers again, as he had done before, and established the fact beyond all doubt by putting his signature of approval to a petition against the Parliamentary leaders, which was drawn up by certain officers. When the Scottish army was disbanded, he went to Edinburgh in four days—which was going very fast at that time—to plot again, and so darkly too, that it is difficult to decide what his whole object was. Some suppose that he wanted to gain over the Scottish Parliament, as he did in fact gain over,

by presents and favours, many Scottish lords and men of power. Some think that he went to get proofs against the Parliamentary leaders in England of their having treasonably invited the Scottish people to come and help them. With whatever object he went to Scotland, he did little good by going. At the instigation of the EARL OF MONTROSE, a desperate man who was then in prison for plotting, he tried to kidnap three Scottish lords who escaped. A committee of the Parliament at home, who had followed to watch him, writing an account of this INCIDENT, as it was called, to the Parliament, the Parliament made a fresh stir about it; were, or feigned to be, much alarmed for themselves; and wrote to the EARL OF ESSEX, the commander-in-chief, for a guard to protect them.

It is not absolutely proved that the King plotted in Ireland besides, but it is very probable that he did, and that the Queen did, and that he had some wild hope of gaining the Irish people over to his side by favouring a rise among them. Whether or no, they did rise in a most brutal and savage rebellion; in which, encouraged by their priests, they committed such atrocities upon numbers of the English, of both sexes and of all ages, as nobody could believe, but for their being related on oath by eye-witnesses. Whether one hundred thousand or two hundred thousand Protestants were murdered in this outbreak, is uncertain; but, that it was as ruthless and barbarous an outbreak as ever was known among any savage people, is certain.

The King came home from Scotland, determined to make a great struggle for his lost power. He believed that, through his presents and favours, Scotland would take no part against him; and the Lord Mayor of London received him with such a magnificent dinner that he thought he must have become popular again in England. It would take a good many Lord Mayors, however, to make a people, and the King soon found himself mistaken.

Not so soon, though, but that there was a great opposition in the Parliament to a celebrated paper put forth by Pym and Hampden and the rest, called "THE REMONSTRANCE," which set forth all the illegal acts that the King had ever done, but politely laid the blame of them on his bad advisers. Even when it was passed and presented to him, the King still thought himself strong enough to discharge Balfour from his command in the Tower, and to put in his place a man of bad character; to whom the Commons instantly objected, and whom he was obliged to abandon. At this time, the old outcry about the Bishops became

louder than ever, and the old Archbishop of York was so near being murdered as he went down to the House of Lords—being laid hold of by the mob and violently knocked about, in return for very foolishly scolding a shrill boy who was yelping out "No Bishops!"—that he sent for all the Bishops who were in town, and proposed to them to sign a declaration that, as they could no longer without danger to their lives attend their duty in Parliament, they protested against the lawfulness of everything done in their absence. This they asked the King to send to the House of Lords, which he did. Then the House of Commons impeached the whole party of Bishops and sent them off to the Tower.

Taking no warning from this; but encouraged by there being a moderate party in the Parliament who objected to these strong measures, the King, on the third of January, one thousand six hundred and forty-two, took the rashest step that ever was taken by mortal man.

Of his own accord and without advice, he sent the Attorney-General to the House of Lords, to accuse of treason certain members of Parliament who as popular leaders were the most obnoxious to him; LORD KIMBOLTON, SIR ARTHUR HASELRIG, DENZIL HOLLIS, JOHN PYM (they used to call him King Pym, he possessed such power and looked so big), JOHN HAMPDEN, and WILLIAM STRODE. The houses of those members he caused to be entered, and their papers to be sealed up. At the same time he sent a messenger to the House of Commons demanding to have the five gentlemen who were members of that House immediately produced. To this the House replied that they should appear as soon as there was any legal charge against them, and immediately adjourned.

Next day, the House of Commons send into the City to let the Lord Mayor know that their privileges are invaded by the King, and that there is no safety for anybody or anything. Then, when the five members are gone out of the way, down comes the King himself, with all his guard and from two to three hundred gentlemen and soldiers, of whom the greater part were armed. These he leaves in the hall; and then, with his nephew at his side, goes into the House, takes off his hat, and walks up to the Speaker's chair. The Speaker leaves it, the King stands in front of it, looks about him steadily for a little while, and says he has come for those five members. No one speaks, and then he calls John Pym by name. No one speaks, and then he calls Denzil Hollis by name. No one speaks, and then he asks the Speaker of the House where those five members are? The Speaker,

answering on his knee, nobly replies that he is the servant of that House, and that he has neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, anything but what the House commands him. Upon this, the King, beaten from that time evermore, replies that he will seek them himself, for they have committed treason; and goes out, with his hat in his hand, amid some audible murmurs from the members.

No words can describe the hurry that arose out of doors when all this was known. The five members had gone for safety to a house in Coleman Street, in the City, where they were guarded all night; and indeed the whole city watched in arms like an army. At ten o'clock in the morning, the King already frightened at what he had done, came to the Guildhall, with only half a dozen lords, and made a speech to the people, hoping they would not shelter those whom he accused of treason. Next day, he issued a proclamation for the apprehension of the five members; but the Parliament minded it so little that they made great arrangements for having them brought down to Westminster in great state, five days afterwards. The King was so alarmed now at his own imprudence, if not for his own safety, that he left his palace at Whitehall, and went away with his Queen and children to Hampton Court.

It was the eleventh of May, when the five members were carried in state and triumph to Westminster. They were taken by water. The river could not be seen for the boats on it; and the five members were hemmed in by barges full of men and great guns, ready to protect them, at any cost. Along the Strand a large body of the train-bands of London, under their commander, SKIPPON, marched to be ready to assist the little fleet. Beyond them came a crowd who choked the streets, roaring incessantly about the Bishops, and the Papists, and crying out contemptuously as they passed Whitehall, "What has become of the King?" With this great noise outside the House of Commons, and with great silence within, Mr. Pym rose and informed the House of the great kindness with which they had been received in the City. Upon that, the House called the sheriffs in and thanked them, and requested the train-bands, under their commander Skippon, to guard the House of Commons every day. Then, came four thousand men on horseback out of Buckinghamshire, offering their services as a guard too, and bearing a petition to the King, complaining of the injury that had been done to Mr. Hampden, who was their county man and much beloved and honoured.

When the King set off for Hampton Court, the gentlemen and soldiers who had been with him followed him out of town as far as Kingston-upon-Thames; next day, Lord Digby came to them from the King at Hampton Court, in his coach and six, to inform them that the King accepted their protection. This, the Parliament said, was making war against the kingdom, and Lord Digby fled abroad. The Parliament then immediately applied themselves to getting hold of the military power of the country, well knowing that the King was already trying hard to use it against them, and that he had secretly sent the Earl of Newcastle to Hull, to secure a valuable magazine of arms and gunpowder that was there. In those times, every county had its own magazines of arms and powder, for its own train-bands or militia; so the Parliament brought in a bill claiming the right (which up to this time had belonged to the King) of appointing the Lord Lieutenants of counties, who commanded these train-bands; also, of having all the forts, castles, and garrisons in the kingdom, put into the hands of such governors as they, the Parliament, could confide in. It also passed a law depriving the Bishops of their votes. The King gave his assent to that bill, but would not abandon the right of appointing the Lord Lieutenants, though he said he was willing to appoint such as might be suggested to him by the Parliament. When the Earl of Pembroke asked him whether he would not give way on that question for a time, he said, "By God! not for one hour!" and upon this he and the Parliament went to war.

His young daughter was betrothed to the Prince of Orange. On pretence of taking her to the country of her future husband, the Queen was already got safely away to Holland, there to pawn the Crown jewels for money to raise an army on the King's side. The Lord Admiral being sick, the House of Commons now named the Earl of Warwick to hold his place for a year. The King named another gentleman; the House of Commons took its own way, and the Earl of Warwick became Lord Admiral without the King's consent. The Parliament sent orders down to Hull to have that magazine removed to London; the King went down to Hull to take it himself. The citizens would not admit him into the town, and the governor would not admit him into the castle. The Parliament resolved that whatever the two Houses passed, and the King would not consent to, should be called an ORDINANCE, and should be as much a law as if he did consent to it. The King protested against this, and gave notice that these ordinances were

not to be obeyed. The King, attended by the majority of the House of Peers, and by many members of the House of Commons, established himself at York. The Chancellor went to him with the Great Seal, and the Parliament made a new Great Seal. The Queen sent over a ship full of arms and ammunition, and the King issued letters to borrow money at high interest. The Parliament raised twenty regiments of foot and seventy-five troops of horse; and the people willingly aided them with their money, plate, jewellery, and trinkets—the married women even with their wedding-rings. Every member of Parliament who could raise a troop or a regiment in his own part of the country, dressed it according to his taste and in his own colours, and commanded it. Foremost among them all, OLIVER CROMWELL raised a troop of horse—thoroughly in earnest and thoroughly well armed—who were, perhaps, the best soldiers that ever were seen.

In some of their proceedings, this famous Parliament passed the bounds of previous law and custom, yielded to and favoured riotous assemblages of the people, and acted tyrannically in imprisoning some who differed from the popular leaders. But again, you are always to remember that the twelve years during which the King had had his own wilful way, had gone before; and that nothing could make the times what they might, could, would, or should have been, if those twelve years had never rolled away.

THIRD PART.

I SHALL not try to relate the particulars of the great civil war between King Charles the First and the Long Parliament, which lasted nearly four years, and a full account of which would fill many large books. It was a sad thing that Englishmen should once more be fighting against Englishmen on English ground; but, it is some consolation to know that on both sides there was great humanity, forbearance, and honour. The soldiers of the Parliament were far more remarkable for these good qualities than the soldiers of the King (many of whom fought for mere pay without much caring for the cause); but those of the nobility and gentry who were on the King's side were so brave, and so faithful to him, that their conduct cannot but command our highest admiration. Among them were great numbers of Catholics, who took the royal side because the Queen was so strongly of their persuasion.

The King might have distinguished some of

these gallant spirits, if he had been as generous a spirit himself, by giving them the command of his army. Instead of that, however, true to his old high notions of royalty, he entrusted it to his two nephews, PRINCE RUPERT and PRINCE MAURICE, who were of royal blood and came over from abroad to help him. It might have been better for him if they had stayed away; since Prince Rupert was an impetuous hot-headed fellow, whose only idea was to dash into battle at all times and seasons, and lay about him.

The general-in-chief of the Parliamentary army was the Earl of Essex, a gentleman of honour and an excellent soldier. A little while before the war broke out, there had been some rioting at Westminster between certain officious law students and noisy soldiers, and the shopkeepers and their apprentices, and the general people in the streets. At that time the King's friends called the crowd, Roundheads, because the apprentices wore short hair; the crowd, in return, called their opponents Cavaliers, meaning that they were a blustering set, who pretended to be very military. These two words now began to be used to distinguish the two sides in the civil war. The Royalists also called the Parliamentary men Rebels and Rogues, while the Parliamentary men called *them* Malignants, and spoke of themselves as the Godly, the Honest, and so forth.

The war broke out at Portsmouth, where that double traitor Goring had again gone over to the King and was besieged by the Parliamentary troops. Upon this, the King proclaimed the Earl of Essex and the officers serving under him, traitors, and called upon his loyal subjects to meet him in arms at Nottingham on the twenty-fifth of August. But his loyal subjects came about him in scanty numbers, and it was a windy gloomy day, and the Royal Standard got blown down, and the whole affair was very melancholy. The chief engagements after this, took place in the vale of the Red Horse near Banbury, at Brentford, at Devizes, at Chalgrave Field (where Mr. Hampden was so sorely wounded while fighting at the head of his men, that he died within a week), at Newbury (in which battle LORD FALKLAND, one of the best noblemen on the King's side, was killed), at Leicester, at Naseby, at Winchester, at Marston Moor near York, at Newcastle, and in many other parts of England and Scotland. These battles were attended with various successes. At one time, the King was victorious; at another time, the Parliament. But almost all the great and busy towns were against the King;

and when it was considered necessary to fortify London, all ranks of people, from labouring men and women, up to lords and ladies, worked hard together with heartiness and good will. The most distinguished leaders on the Parliamentary side were HAMPDEN, SIR THOMAS FAIRFAX, and, above all, OLIVER CROMWELL, and his son-in-law IRETON.

During the whole of this war, the people, to whom it was very expensive and irksome, and to whom it was made the more distressing by almost every family being divided—some of its members attaching themselves to one side and some to the other—were over and over again most anxious for peace. So were some of the best men in each cause. Accordingly, treaties of peace were discussed between commissioners from the Parliament and the King; at York, at Oxford (where the King held a little Parliament of his own), and at Uxbridge. But they came to nothing. In all these negotiations, and in all his difficulties, the King showed himself at his best. He was courageous, cool, self-possessed, and clever; but, the old taint of his character was always in him, and he was never for one single moment to be trusted. Lord Clarendon, the historian, one of his highest admirers, supposes that he had unhappily promised the Queen never to make peace without her consent, and that this must often be taken as his excuse. He never kept his word from night to morning. He signed a cessation of hostilities with the blood-stained Irish rebels for a sum of money, and invited the Irish regiments over, to help him against the Parliament. In the battle of Naseby, his cabinet was seized and was found to contain a correspondence with the Queen, in which he expressly told her that he had deceived the Parliament—a mongrel Parliament, he called it now, as an improvement on his old term of vipers—in pretending to recognise it and to treat with it; and from which it further appeared that he had long been in secret treaty with the Duke of Lorraine for a foreign army of ten thousand men. Disappointed in this, he sent a most devoted friend of his, the EARL OF GLAMORGAN, to Ireland, to conclude a secret treaty with the Catholic powers, to send him an Irish army of ten thousand men; in return for which he was to bestow great favours on the Catholic religion. And, when this treaty was discovered in the carriage of a fighting Irish Archbishop who was killed in one of the many skirmishes of those days, he basely denied and deserted his attached friend, the Earl, on his being charged with high treason; and—even worse than this—had left blanks in the secret instructions he gave him

with his own kingly hand, expressly that he might thus save himself.

At last, on the twenty-seventh day of April, one thousand six hundred and forty-six, the King found himself in the city of Oxford, so surrounded by the Parliamentary army who were closing in upon him on all sides that he felt that if he would escape he must delay no longer. So, that night, having altered the cut of his hair and beard, he was dressed up as a servant and put upon a horse with a cloak strapped behind him, and rode out of the town behind one of his own faithful followers, with a clergyman of that country who knew the road well, for a guide. He rode towards London as far as Harrow, and then altered his plans and resolved, it would seem, to go to the Scottish camp. The Scottish men had been invited over to help the Parliamentary army, and had a large force then in England. The King was so desperately intriguing in everything he did, that it is doubtful what he exactly meant by this step. He took it, anyhow, and delivered himself up to the EARL OF LEVEN, the Scottish general-in-chief, who treated him as an honourable prisoner. Negotiations between the Parliament on the one hand and the Scottish authorities on the other, as to what should be done with him, lasted until the following February. Then, when the King had refused to the Parliament the concession of that old militia point for twenty years, and had refused to Scotland the recognition of its Solemn League and Covenant, Scotland got a handsome sum for its army and its help, and the King into the bargain. He was taken, by certain Parliamentary commissioners appointed to receive him, to one of his own houses, called Holmby House, near Althorpe, in Northamptonshire.

While the Civil War was still in progress, John Pym died, and was buried with great honour in Westminster Abbey—not with greater honour than he deserved, for the liberties of Englishmen owe a mighty debt to Pym and Hampden. The war was but newly over when the Earl of Essex died, of an illness brought on by his having overheated himself in a stag hunt in Windsor Forest. He, too, was buried in Westminster Abbey, with great state. I wish it were not necessary to add that Archbishop Laud died upon the scaffold when the war was not yet done. His trial lasted in all nearly a year, and, it being doubtful even then whether the charges brought against him amounted to treason, the odious old contrivance of the worst kings was resorted to, and a bill of attainder was brought in against him. He was a violently prejudiced

and mischievous person; had had strong ear-cropping and nose-splitting propensities, as you know; and had done a world of harm. But he died peaceably, and like a brave old man.

FOURTH PART.

WHEN the Parliament had got the King into their hands, they became very anxious to get rid of their army, in which Oliver Cromwell had begun to acquire great power; not only because of his courage and high abilities, but because he professed to be very sincere in the Scottish sort of Puritan religion that was then exceedingly popular among the soldiers. They were as much opposed to the Bishops as to the Pope himself; and the very privates, drummers, and trumpeters, had such an inconvenient habit of starting up and preaching long-winded discourses, that I would not have belonged to that army on any account.

So, the Parliament, being far from sure but that the army might begin to preach and fight against them now it had nothing else to do, proposed to disband the greater part of it, to send another part to serve in Ireland against the rebels, and to keep only a small force in England. But, the army would not consent to be broken up, except upon its own conditions; and, when the Parliament showed an intention of compelling it, it acted for itself in an unexpected manner. A certain cornet, of the name of JOICE, arrived at Holmby House one night, attended by four hundred horsemen, went into the King's room with his hat in one hand and a pistol in the other, and told the King that he had come to take him away. The King was willing enough to go, and only stipulated that he should be publicly required to do so next morning. Next morning, accordingly, he appeared on the top of the steps of the house, and asked Cornet Joice before his men and the guard set there by the Parliament, what authority he had for taking him away? To this Cornet Joice replied, "The authority of the army." "Have you a written commission?" said the King. Joice, pointing to his four hundred men on horseback, replied, "That is my commission." "Well," said the King, smiling, as if he were pleased, "I never before read such a commission; but it is written in fair and legible characters. This is a company of as handsome proper gentlemen as I have seen a long while." He was asked where he would like to live, and he said at Newmarket. So, to Newmarket he and Cornet Joice and the four

hundred horsemen rode; the King remarking, in the same smiling way, that he could ride as far at a spell as Cornet Joice, or any man there.

The King quite believed, I think, that the army were his friends. He said as much to Fairfax when that general, Oliver Cromwell, and Ireton, went to persuade him to return to the custody of the Parliament. He preferred to remain as he was, and resolved to remain as he was. And when the army moved nearer and nearer London to frighten the Parliament into yielding to their demands, they took the King with them. It was a deplorable thing that England should be at the mercy of a great body of soldiers with arms in their hands; but the King certainly favoured them at this important time of his life, as compared with the more lawful power that tried to control him. It must be added, however, that they treated him, as yet, more respectfully and kindly than the Parliament had done. They allowed him to be attended by his own servants, to be splendidly entertained at various houses, and to see his children—at Cavesham House, near Reading—for two days. Whereas, the Parliament had been rather hard with him, and had only allowed him to ride out and play at bowls.

It is much to be believed that if the King could have been trusted, even at this time, he might have been saved. Even Oliver Cromwell expressly said that he did believe that no man could enjoy his possessions in peace, unless the King had his rights. He was not unfriendly towards the King; he had been present when he received his children, and had been much affected by the pitiable nature of the scene; he saw the King often; he frequently walked and talked with him in the long galleries and pleasant gardens of the Palace at Hampton Court, whither he was now removed; and in all this risked something of his influence with the army. But, the King was in secret hopes of help from the Scottish people; and the moment he was encouraged to join them he began to be cool to his new friends, the army, and to tell the officers that they could not possibly do without him. At the very time, too, when he was promising to make Cromwell and Ireton noblemen, if they would help him up to his old height, he was writing to the Queen that he meant to hang them. They both afterwards declared that they had been privately informed that such a letter would be found, on a certain evening, sewed up in a saddle which would be taken to the Blue Boar in Holborn to be sent to Dover; and that they went there, disguised as common soldiers, and sat drinking in the inn-yard until a man

came with the saddle, which they ripped up with their knives, and therein found the letter. I see little reason to doubt the story. It is certain that Oliver Cromwell told one of the King's most faithful followers that the King could not be trusted, and that he would not be answerable if anything amiss were to happen to him. Still, even after that, he kept a promise he had made to the King, by letting him know that there was a plot with a certain portion of the army to seize him. I believe that, in fact, he sincerely wanted the King to escape abroad, and so to be got rid of without more trouble or danger. That Oliver himself had work enough with the army is pretty plain; for some of the troops were so mutinous against him, and against those who acted with him at this time, that he found it necessary to have one man shot at the head of his regiment to overawe the rest.

The King, when he received Oliver's warning, made his escape from Hampton Court; after some indecision and uncertainty, he went to Carisbrooke Castle in the Isle of Wight. At first he was pretty free there; but, even there, he carried on a pretended treaty with the Parliament, while he was really treating with commissioners from Scotland to send an army into England to take his part. When he broke off this treaty with the Parliament (having settled with Scotland) and was treated as a prisoner, his treatment was not changed too soon, for he had plotted to escape that very night to a ship sent by the Queen, which was lying off the island.

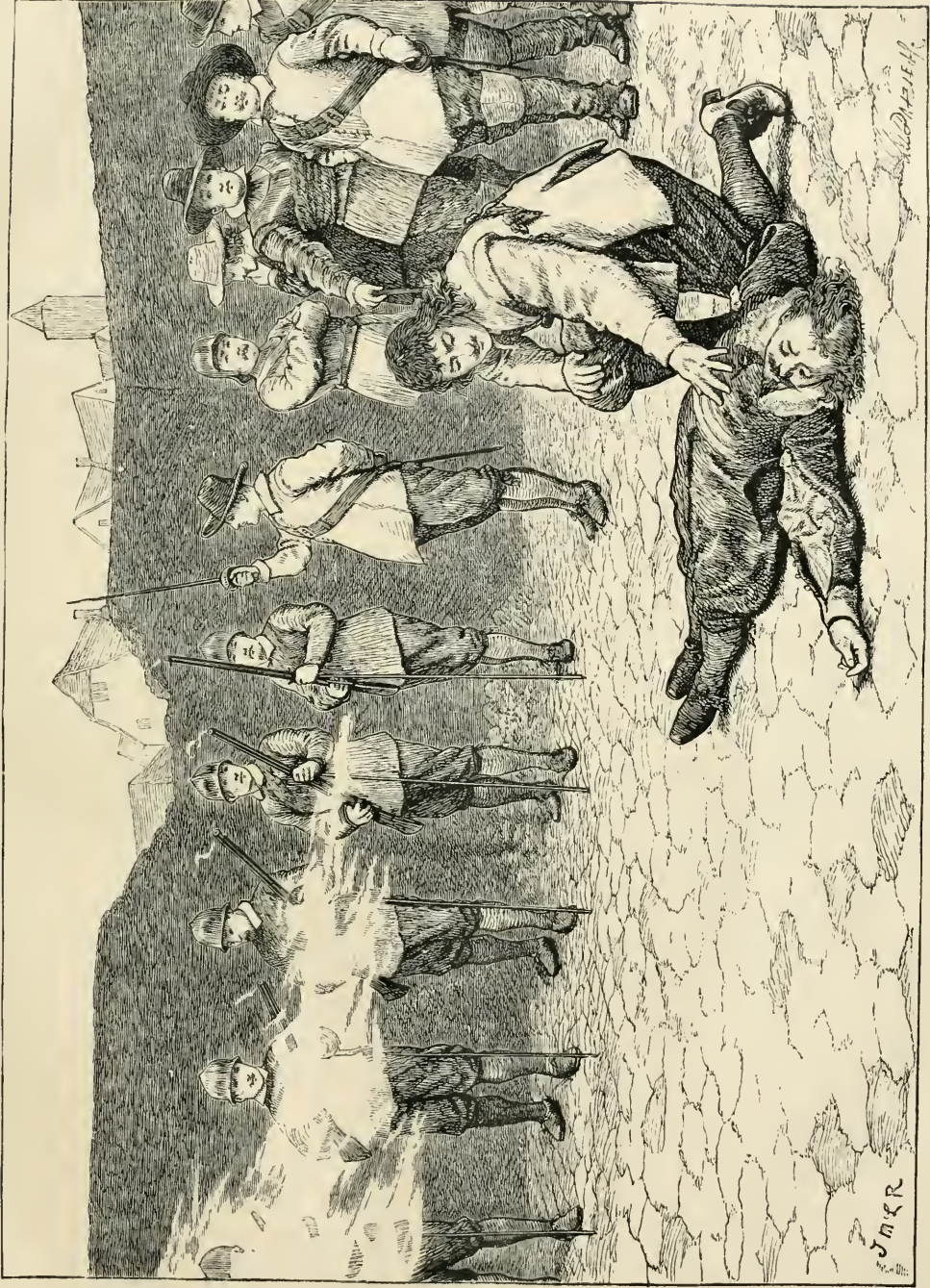
He was doomed to be disappointed in his hopes from Scotland. The agreement he had made with the Scottish Commissioners was not favourable enough to the religion of that country to please the Scottish clergy; and they preached against it. The consequence was, that the army raised in Scotland and sent over, was too small to do much; and that, although it was helped by a rising of the Royalists in England and by good soldiers from Ireland, it could make no head against the Parliamentary army under such men as Cromwell and Fairfax. The King's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, came over from Holland with nineteen ships (a part of the English fleet having gone over to him) to help his father; but nothing came of his voyage, and he was fain to return. The most remarkable event of this second civil war was the cruel execution by the Parliamentary General, of SIR CHARLES LUCAS and SIR GEORGE LISLE, two grand Royalist generals, who had bravely defended Colchester under every disadvantage of famine

and distress for nearly three months. When Sir Charles Lucas was shot, Sir George Lisle kissed his body, and said to the soldiers who were to shoot him, "Come nearer, and make sure of me." "I warrant you, Sir George," said one of the soldiers, "we shall hit you." "Ay?" he returned with a smile, "but I have been nearer to you, my friends, many a time, and you have missed me."

The Parliament, after being fearfully bullied by the army—who demanded to have seven members whom they disliked given up to them—had voted that they would have nothing more to do with the King. On the conclusion, however, of this second civil war (which did not last more than six months), they appointed commissioners to treat with him. The King, then so far released again as to be allowed to live in a private house at Newport in the Isle of Wight, managed his own part of the negotiation with a sense that was admired by all who saw him, and gave up, in the end, all that was asked of him—even yielding (which he had steadily refused, so far) to the temporary abolition of the bishops, and the transfer of their church land to the Crown. Still, with his old fatal vice upon him, when his best friends joined the commissioners in beseeching him to yield all those points as the only means of saving himself from the army, he was plotting to escape from the island; he was holding correspondence with his friends and the Catholics in Ireland, though declaring that he was not; and he was writing, with his own hand, that in what he yielded he meant nothing but to get time to escape.

Matters were at this pass when the army, resolved to defy the Parliament, marched up to London. The Parliament, not afraid of them now, and boldly led by Hollis, voted that the King's concessions were sufficient ground for settling the peace of the kingdom. Upon that, COLONEL RICH and COLONEL PRIDE went down to the House of Commons with a regiment of horse soldiers and a regiment of foot; and Colonel Pride, standing in the lobby with a list of the members who were obnoxious to the army in his hand, had them pointed out to him as they came through, and took them all into custody. This proceeding was afterwards called by the people, for a joke, PRIDE'S PURGE. Cromwell was in the North, at the head of his men, at the time, but when he came home, approved of what had been done.

What with imprisoning some members and causing others to stay away, the army had now reduced the House of Commons to some fifty or so. These soon voted that it was treason in a



EXECUTION OF SIR CHARLES LUCAS AND SIR GEORGE LISLE.—P. 161

king to make war against his parliament and his people, and sent an ordinance up to the House of Lords for the King's being tried as a traitor. The House of Lords, then sixteen in number, to a man rejected it. Thereupon, the Commons made an ordinance of their own, that they were the supreme government of the country, and would bring the King to trial.

The King had been taken for security to a place called Hurst Castle; a lonely house on a rock in the sea, connected with the coast of Hampshire by a rough road two miles long at low water. Thence, he was ordered to be removed to Windsor; thence, after being but rudely used there, and having none but soldiers to wait upon him at table, he was brought up to St. James's Palace in London, and told that his trial was appointed for next day.

On Saturday, the twentieth of January, one thousand six hundred and forty-nine, this memorable trial began. The House of Commons had settled that one hundred and thirty-five persons should form the Court, and these were taken from the House itself, from among the officers of the army, and from among the lawyers and citizens. JOHN BRADSHAW, serjeant-at-law, was appointed president. The place was Westminster Hall. At the upper end, in a red velvet chair, sat the president, with his hat (lined with plates of iron for his protection) on his head. The rest of the Court sat on side benches, also wearing their hats. The King's seat was covered with velvet, like that of the president, and was opposite to it. He was brought from St. James's to Whitehall, and from Whitehall he came by water to his trial.

When he came in, he looked round very steadily on the Court, and on the great number of spectators, and then sat down: presently he got up and looked round again. On the indictment "against Charles Stuart, for high treason," being read, he smiled several times, and he denied the authority of the Court, saying that there could be no parliament without a House of Lords, and that he saw no House of Lords there. Also, that the King ought to be there, and that he saw no King in the King's right place. Bradshaw replied, that the Court was satisfied with its authority, and that its authority was God's authority and the kingdom's. He then adjourned the Court to the following Monday. On that day, the trial was resumed, and went on all the week. When the Saturday came, as the King passed forward to his place in the Hall, some soldiers and others cried for "justice!" and execution on him.

That day, too, Bradshaw, like an angry Sultan, wore a red robe, instead of the black robe he had worn before. The King was sentenced to death that day. As he went out, one solitary soldier said, "God bless you, Sir!" For this, his officer struck him. The King said he thought the punishment exceeded the offence. The silver head of his walking-stick had fallen off while he leaned upon it, at one time of the trial. The accident seemed to disturb him, as if he thought it ominous of the falling of his own head; and he admitted as much, now it was all over.

Being taken back to Whitehall, he sent to the House of Commons, saying that as the time of his execution might be nigh, he wished he might be allowed to see his darling children. It was granted. On the Monday he was taken back to St. James's; and his two children then in England, the PRINCESS ELIZABETH thirteen years old, and the DUKE OF GLOUCESTER nine years old, were brought to take leave of him, from Sion House, near Brentford. It was a sad and touching scene, when he kissed and fondled those poor children, and made a little present of two diamond seals to the Princess, and gave them tender messages to their mother (who little deserved them, for she had a lover of her own whom she married soon afterwards), and told them that he died "for the laws and liberties of the land." I am bound to say that I don't think he did, but I dare say he believed so.

There were ambassadors from Holland that day, to intercede for the unhappy King, whom you and I both wish the Parliament had spared; but they got no answer. The Scottish Commissioners interceded too; so did the Prince of Wales, by a letter in which he offered as the next heir to the throne, to accept any conditions from the Parliament; so did the Queen, by letter likewise. Notwithstanding all, the warrant for the execution was this day signed. There is a story that as Oliver Cromwell went to the table with the pen in his hand to put his signature to it, he drew his pen across the face of one of the commissioners, who was standing near, and marked it with ink. That commissioner had not signed his own name yet, and the story adds that when he came to do it he marked Cromwell's face with ink in the same way.

The King slept well, untroubled by the knowledge that it was his last night on earth, and rose on the thirtieth of January, two hours before day, and dressed himself carefully. He put on two shirts lest he should tremble with the cold, and

had his hair very carefully combed. The warrant had been directed to three officers of the army, COLONEL HACKER, COLONEL HUNKS, and COLONEL PHAYER. At ten o'clock, the first of these came to the door and said it was time to go to Whitehall. The King, who had always been a

quick walker, walked at his usual speed through the Park, and called out to the guard, with his accustomed voice of command, "March on apace!" When he came to Whitehall, he was taken to his own bedroom, where a breakfast was set forth. As he had taken the Sacrament,



OLIVER CROMWELL AND IRETON AT THE BLUE BOAR.

he would eat nothing more; but, at about the time when the church bells struck twelve at noon (for he had to wait through the scaffold not being ready), he took the advice of the good BISHOP JUXON who was with him, and ate a little bread and drank a glass of claret. Soon

after he had taken this refreshment, Colonel Hacker came to the chamber with the warrant in his hand, and called for Charles Stuart.

And then, through the long gallery of Whitehall Palace, which he had often seen light and gay and merry and crowded, in very different

times, the fallen King passed along, until he came to the centre window of the Banqueting House, through which he emerged upon the scaffold, which was hung with black. He looked at the two executioners, who were dressed in black and masked; he looked at the troops of soldiers on horseback and on foot, and all looked up at him in silence; he looked at the vast array of spectators, filling up the view beyond, and turning all their faces upon him; he looked at his old Palace of St. James's; and he looked at the block. He seemed a little troubled to find that it was so low, and asked, "if there were no place higher?" Then, to those upon the scaffold, he said "that it was the Parliament who had begun the war, and not he; but he hoped they might be guiltless too, as ill instruments had gone between them. In one respect," he said, "he suffered justly; and that was because he had permitted an unjust sentence to be executed on another." In this he referred to the Earl of Strafford.

He was not at all afraid to die; but he was anxious to die easily. When some one touched the axe while he was speaking, he broke off and called out, "Take heed of the axe! take heed of the axe!" He also said to Colonel Hacker, "Take care that they do not put me to pain." He told the executioner, "I shall say but very short prayers, and then thrust out my hands"—as the sign to strike.

He put his hair up, under a white satin cap which the bishop had carried, and said, "I have a good cause and a gracious God on my side." The bishop told him that he had but one stage more to travel in this weary world, and that, though it was a turbulent and troublesome stage, it was a short one, and would carry him a great way—all the way from earth to Heaven. The King's last word, as he gave his cloak and the George—the decoration from his breast—to the bishop, was, "Remember!" He then kneeled down, laid his head on the block, spread out his hands, and was instantly killed. One universal groan broke from the crowd; and the soldiers, who had sat on their horses and stood in their ranks immovable as statues, were of a sudden all in motion, clearing the streets.

Thus, in the forty-ninth year of his age, falling at the same time of his career as Strafford had fallen in his, perished Charles the First. With all my sorrow for him, I cannot agree with him that he died "the martyr of the people;" for the people had been martyrs to him, and to his ideas of a King's rights, long before. Indeed, I am afraid that he was but a bad judge of martyrs; for he had called that infamous Duke of Buckingham "the Martyr of his Sovereign."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ENGLAND UNDER OLIVER CROMWELL.

BEFORE sunset on the memorable day on which King Charles the First was executed, the House of Commons passed an act declaring it treason in any one to proclaim the Prince of Wales—or anybody else—King of England. Soon afterwards, it declared that the House of Lords was useless and dangerous, and ought to be abolished; and directed that the late King's statue should be taken down from the Royal Exchange in the City and other public places. Having laid hold of some famous Royalists who had escaped from prison, and having beheaded the DUKE OF HAMILTON, LORD HOLLAND, and LORD CAPEL, in Palace Yard (all of whom died very courageously), they then appointed a Council of State to govern the country. It consisted of forty-one members, of whom five were peers. Bradshaw was made president. The House of Commons also re-admitted members who had opposed the King's death, and made up its numbers to about a hundred and fifty.

But, it still had an army of more than forty thousand men to deal with, and a very hard task it was to manage them. Before the King's execution, the army had appointed some of its officers to remonstrate between them and the Parliament; and now the common soldiers began to take that office upon themselves. The regiments under orders for Ireland mutinied; one troop of horse in the city of London seized their own flag, and refused to obey orders. For this, the ringleader was shot: which did not mend the matter, for, both his comrades and the people made a public funeral for him, and accompanied the body to the grave with sound of trumpets and with a gloomy procession of persons carrying bundles of rosemary steeped in blood. Oliver was the only man to deal with such difficulties as these, and he soon cut them short by bursting at midnight into the town of Burford, near Salisbury, where the mutineers were sheltered, taking four hundred of them prisoners, and shooting a number of them by sentence of court-martial. The soldiers soon found, as all men did, that Oliver was not a man to be trifled with. And there was an end of the mutiny.

The Scottish Parliament did not know Oliver yet; so, on hearing of the King's execution, it proclaimed the Prince of Wales King Charles the Second, on condition of his respecting the

Solemn League and Covenant. Charles was abroad at that time, and so was Montrose, from whose help he had hopes enough to keep him holding on and off with commissioners from Scotland, just as his father might have done. These hopes were soon at an end: for, Montrose, having raised a few hundred exiles in Germany, and landed with them in Scotland, found that the people there, instead of joining him, deserted the country at his approach. He was soon taken prisoner and carried to Edinburgh. There he was received with every possible insult, and carried to prison in a cart, his officers going two and two before him. He was sentenced by the Parliament to be hanged on a gallows thirty feet high, to have his head set on a spike in Edinburgh, and his limbs distributed in other places, according to the old barbarous manner. He said he had always acted under the Royal orders, and only wished he had limbs enough to be distributed through Christendom, that it might be the more widely known how loyal he had been. He went to the scaffold in a bright and brilliant dress, and made a bold end at thirty-eight years of age. The breath was scarcely out of his body when Charles abandoned his memory, and denied that he had ever given him orders to rise in his behalf. O the family failing was strong in that Charles then!

Oliver had been appointed by the Parliament to command the army in Ireland, where he took a terrible vengeance for the sanguinary rebellion, and made tremendous havoc, particularly in the siege of Drogheda, where no quarter was given, and where he found at least a thousand of the inhabitants shut up together in the great church: every one of whom was killed by his soldiers, usually known as OLIVER'S IRONSIDES. There were numbers of friars and priests among them, and Oliver gruffly wrote home in his despatch that these were "knocked on the head" like the rest.

But, Charles having got over to Scotland where the men of the Solemn League and Covenant led him a prodigiously dull life and made him very weary with long sermons and grim Sundays, the Parliament called the redoubtable Oliver home to knock the Scottish men on the head for setting up that Prince. Oliver left his son-in-law, Ireton, as general in Ireland in his stead (he died there afterwards), and he imitated the example of his father-in-law with such good will that he brought the country to subjection, and laid it at the feet of the Parliament. In the end, they passed an act for the settlement of Ireland, generally pardoning all the common people, but exempting from this grace such of

the wealthier sort as had been concerned in the rebellion, or in any killing of Protestants, or who refused to lay down their arms. Great numbers of Irish were got out of the country to serve under Catholic powers abroad, and a quantity of land was declared to have been forfeited by past offences, and was given to people who had lent money to the Parliament early in the war. These were sweeping measures; but, if Oliver Cromwell had had his own way fully, and had stayed in Ireland, he would have done more yet.

However, as I have said, the Parliament wanted Oliver for Scotland; so, home Oliver came, and was made commander of all the Forces of the Commonwealth of England, and in three days away he went with sixteen thousand soldiers to fight the Scottish men. Now, the Scottish men, being then—as you will generally find them now—mighty cautious, reflected that the troops they had, were not used to war like the Ironsides, and would be beaten in an open fight. Therefore they said, "If we lie quiet in our trenches in Edinburgh here, and if all the farmers come into the town and desert the country, the Ironsides will be driven out by iron hunger and be forced to go away." This was, no doubt, the wisest plan; but as the Scottish clergy *would* interfere with what they knew nothing about, and would perpetually preach long sermons exhorting the soldiers to come out and fight, the soldiers got it in their heads that they absolutely must come out and fight. Accordingly, in an evil hour for themselves, they came out of their safe position. Oliver fell upon them instantly, and killed three thousand, and took ten thousand prisoners.

To gratify the Scottish Parliament, and preserve their favour, Charles had signed a declaration they laid before him, reproaching the memory of his father and mother, and representing himself as a most religious Prince, to whom the Solemn League and Covenant was as dear as life. He meant no sort of truth in this, and soon afterwards galloped away on horseback to join some tiresome Highland friends, who were always flourishing dirks and broadswords. He was overtaken and induced to return; but this attempt, which was called "The Start," did him just so much service, that they did not preach quite such long sermons at him afterwards as they had done before.

On the first of January, one thousand six hundred and fifty-one, the Scottish people crowned him at Scone. He immediately took the chief command of an army of twenty thousand men, and marched to Stirling. His hopes were height-

ened, I dare say, by the redoubtable Oliver being ill of an ague; but Oliver scrambled out of bed in no time, and went to work with such energy that he got behind the Royalist army and cut it off from all communication with Scotland. There was nothing for it then, but to go on to England; so it went on as far as Worcester, where the mayor and some of the gentry proclaimed King Charles the Second straightway. His proclamation, however, was of little use to him, for very few Royalists appeared; and, on the very same day, two people were publicly beheaded on Tower Hill for espousing his cause. Up came Oliver to Worcester too, at double quick speed, and he and his Ironsides so laid about them in the great battle which was fought there, that they completely beat the Scottish men, and destroyed the Royalist army; though the Scottish men fought so gallantly that it took five hours to do.

The escape of Charles after this battle of Worcester did him good service long afterwards, for it induced many of the generous English people to take a romantic interest in him, and to think much better of him than he ever deserved. He fled in the night, with not more than sixty followers, to the house of a Catholic lady in Staffordshire. There, for his greater safety, the whole sixty left him. He cropped his hair, stained his face and hands brown as if they were sunburnt, put on the clothes of a labouring countryman, and went out in the morning with his axe in his hand, accompanied by four woodcutters who were brothers, and another man who was their brother-in-law. These good fellows made a bed for him under a tree, as the weather was very bad; and the wife of one of them brought him food to eat; and the old mother of the four brothers came and fell down on her knees before him in the wood, and thanked God that her sons were engaged in saving his life. At night, he came out of the forest and went on to another house which was near the river Severn, with the intention of passing into Wales; but the place swarmed with soldiers, and the bridges were guarded, and all the boats were made fast. So, after lying in a hay-loft covered over with hay, for some time, he came out of his place, attended by COLONEL CARELESS, a Catholic gentleman who had met him there, and with whom he lay hid, all next day, up in the shady branches of a fine old oak. It was lucky for the King that it was September-time, and that the leaves had not begun to fall, since he and the Colonel, perched up in this tree, could catch glimpses of the soldiers riding about below, and could hear the crash in the wood as they went about beating the boughs.

After this, he walked and walked until his feet were all blistered; and, having been concealed all one day in a house which was searched by the troopers while he was there, went with LORD WILMOT, another of his good friends, to a place called Bentley, where one MISS LANE, a Protestant lady, had obtained a pass to be allowed to ride through the guards to see a relation of hers near Bristol. Disguised as a servant, he rode in the saddle before this young lady to the house of SIR JOHN WINTER, while Lord Wilmot rode there boldly, like a plain country gentleman, with dogs at his heels. It happened that Sir John Winter's butler had been servant in Richmond Palace, and knew Charles the moment he set eyes upon him; but, the butler was faithful and kept the secret. As no ship could be found to carry him abroad, it was planned that he should go—still travelling with Miss Lane as her servant—to another house, at Trent near Sherborne in Dorsetshire; and then Miss Lane and her cousin, MR. LASCELLES, who had gone on horseback beside her all the way, went home. I hope Miss Lane was going to marry that cousin, for I am sure she must have been a brave kind girl. If I had been that cousin, I should certainly have loved Miss Lane.

When Charles, lonely for the loss of Miss Lane, was safe at Trent, a ship was hired at Lyme, the master of which engaged to take two gentlemen to France. In the evening of the same day, the King—now riding as servant before another young lady—set off for a public-house at a place called Charmouth, where the captain of the vessel was to take him on board. But, the captain's wife, being afraid of her husband getting into trouble, locked him up and would not let him sail. Then they went away to Bridport; and, coming to the inn there, found the stable-yard full of soldiers who were on the look-out for Charles, and who talked about him while they drank. He had such presence of mind, that he led the horses of his party through the yard as any other servant might have done, and said, "Come out of the way, you soldiers; let us have room to pass here!" As he went along, he met a half-tipsy ostler, who rubbed his eyes and said to him, "Why, I was formerly servant to Mr. Potter at Exeter, and surely I have sometimes seen you there, young man?" He certainly had, for Charles had lodged there. His ready answer was, "Ah, I did live with him once; but I have no time to talk now. We'll have a pot of beer together when I come back."

From this dangerous place he returned to Trent, and lay there concealed several days. Then he escaped to Heale, near Salisbury;

where, in the house of a widow lady, he was hidden five days, until the master of a collier lying off Shoreham in Sussex, undertook to convey a "gentleman" to France. On the night of the fifteenth of October, accompanied by two colonels and a merchant, the King rode to Brighton, then a little fishing village, to give the captain of the ship a supper before going on board; but, so many people knew him, that this captain knew him too, and not only he, but the landlord and landlady also. Before he went

away, the landlord came behind his chair, kissed his hand, and said he hoped to live to be a lord and to see his wife a lady; at which Charles laughed. They had had a good supper by this time, and plenty of smoking and drinking, at which the King was a first-rate hand; so, the captain assured him that he would stand by him, and he did. It was agreed that the captain should pretend to sail to Deal, and that Charles should address the sailors and say he was a gentleman in debt who was running away



"BEFORE HE WENT AWAY, THE LANDLORD CAME BEHIND HIS CHAIR," ETC.

from his creditors, and that he hoped they would join him in persuading the captain to put him ashore in France. As the King acted his part very well indeed, and gave the sailors twenty shillings to drink, they begged the captain to do what such a worthy gentleman asked. He pretended to yield to their entreaties, and the King got safe to Normandy.

Ireland being now subdued, and Scotland kept quiet by plenty of forts and soldiers put there by Oliver, the Parliament would have

gone on quietly enough, as far as fighting with any foreign enemy went, but for getting into trouble with the Dutch, who in the spring of the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-one sent a fleet into the Downs under their ADMIRAL VAN TROMP, to call upon the bold English ADMIRAL BLAKE (who was there with half as many ships as the Dutch) to strike his flag. Blake fired a raging broadside instead, and beat off Van Tromp; who, in the autumn, came back again with seventy ships, and challenged

the bold Blake—who still was only half as strong—to fight him. Blake fought him all day; but, finding that the Dutch were too many for him, got quietly off at night. What does Van Tromp upon this, but goes cruising and boasting about the Channel, between the North Foreland and the Isle of Wight, with a great Dutch broom tied to his masthead, as a sign that he could and would sweep the English off the sea! Within three months, Blake lowered his tone though, and his broom too; for, he and two other bold commanders, DEAN and MONK, fought him three whole days, took twenty-three of his ships, shivered his broom to pieces, and settled his business.

Things were no sooner quiet again, than the army began to complain to the Parliament that they were not governing the nation properly, and to hint that they thought they could do it better themselves. Oliver, who had now made up his mind to be the head of the state, or nothing at all, supported them in this, and called a meeting of officers and his own Parliamentary friends, at his lodgings in Whitehall, to consider the best way of getting rid of the Parliament. It had now lasted just as many years as the King's unbridled power had lasted, before it came into existence. The end of the deliberation was, that Oliver went down to the House in his usual plain black dress, with his usual grey worsted stockings, but with an unusual party of soldiers behind him. These last he left in the lobby, and then went in and sat down. Presently he got up, made the Parliament a speech, told them that the Lord had done with them, stamped his foot and said, "You are no Parliament. Bring them in! Bring them in!" At this signal the door flew open, and the soldiers appeared. "This is not honest," said Sir Harry Vane, one of the members. "Sir Harry Vane!" cried Cromwell; "O, Sir Harry Vane! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" Then he pointed out members one by one, and said this man was a drunkard, and that man a dissipated fellow, and that man a liar, and so on. Then he caused the Speaker to be walked out of his chair, told the guard to clear the House, called the mace upon the table—which is a sign that the House is sitting—"a fool's bauble," and said, "here, carry it away!" Being obeyed in all these orders, he quietly locked the door, put the key in his pocket, walked back to Whitehall again, and told his friends, who were still assembled there, what he had done.

They formed a new Council of State after this extraordinary proceeding, and got a new

Parliament together in their own way: which Oliver himself opened in a sort of sermon, and which he said was the beginning of a perfect heaven upon earth. In this Parliament there sat a well-known leather-seller, who had taken the singular name of Praise God Barebones, and from whom it was called, for a joke, Barebones's Parliament, though its general name was the Little Parliament. As it soon appeared that it was not going to put Oliver in the first place, it turned out to be not at all like the beginning of heaven upon earth, and Oliver said it really was not to be borne with. So he cleared off that Parliament in much the same way as he had disposed of the other; and then the council of officers decided that he must be made the supreme authority of the kingdom, under the title of the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth.

So, on the sixteenth of December, one thousand six hundred and fifty-three, a great procession was formed at Oliver's door, and he came out in a black velvet suit and a big pair of boots, and got into his coach and went down to Westminster, attended by the judges, and the lord mayor, and the aldermen, and all the other great and wonderful personages of the country. There, in the Court of Chancery, he publicly accepted the office of Lord Protector. Then he was sworn, and the City sword was handed to him, and the seal was handed to him, and all the other things were handed to him which are usually handed to Kings and Queens on state occasions. When Oliver had handed them all back, he was quite made and completely finished off as Lord Protector; and several of the Ironsides preached about it at great length, all the evening.

SECOND PART.

OLIVER CROMWELL—whom the people long called OLD NOLL—in accepting the office of Protector, had bound himself by a certain paper which was handed to him, called "the Instrument," to summon a Parliament, consisting of between four and five hundred members, in the election of which neither the Royalists nor the Catholics were to have any share. He had also pledged himself that this Parliament should not be dissolved without its own consent until it had sat five months.

When this Parliament met, Oliver made a speech to them of three hours long, very wisely advising them what to do for the credit and happiness of the country. To keep down the

more violent members, he required them to sign a recognition of what they were forbidden by "the Instrument" to do; which was, chiefly, to take the power from one single person at the head of the state or to command the army. Then he dismissed them to go to work. With his usual vigour and resolution he went to work himself with some frantic preachers—who were rather overdoing their sermons in calling him a villain and a tyrant—by shutting up their chapels, and sending a few of them off to prison.

There was not at that time, in England or anywhere else, a man so able to govern the country as Oliver Cromwell. Although he ruled with a strong hand, and levied a very heavy tax on the Royalists (but not until they had plotted against his life), he ruled wisely, and as the times required. He caused England to be so respected abroad, that I wish some lords and gentlemen who have governed it under kings and queens in later days would have taken a leaf out of Oliver Cromwell's book. He sent bold Admiral Blake to the Mediterranean Sea, to make the Duke of Tuscany pay sixty thousand pounds for injuries he had done to British subjects, and spoliation he had committed on English merchants. He further despatched him and his fleet to Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, to have every English ship and every English man delivered up to him that had been taken by pirates in those parts. All this was gloriously done; and it began to be thoroughly well known, all over the world, that England was governed by a man in earnest, who would not allow the English name to be insulted or slighted anywhere.

These were not all his foreign triumphs. He sent a fleet to sea against the Dutch; and the two powers, each with one hundred ships upon its side, met in the English Channel off the North Foreland, where the fight lasted all day long. Dean was killed in this fight; but Monk, who commanded in the same ship with him, threw his cloak over his body, that the sailors might not know of his death, and be disheartened. Nor were they. The English broadsides so exceedingly astonished the Dutch that they sheered off at last, though the redoubtable Van Tromp fired upon them with his own guns for deserting their flag. Soon afterwards, the two fleets engaged again, off the coast of Holland. There, the valiant Van Tromp was shot through the heart, and the Dutch gave in, and peace was made.

Further than this, Oliver resolved not to bear the domineering and bigoted conduct of Spain, which country not only claimed a right to all the gold and silver that could be found in South

America, and treated the ships of all other countries who visited those regions, as pirates, but put English subjects into the horrible Spanish prisons of the Inquisition. So, Oliver told the Spanish ambassador that English ships must be free to go wherever they would, and that English merchants must not be thrown into those same dungeons, no, not for the pleasure of all the priests in Spain. To this, the Spanish ambassador replied that the gold and silver country, and the Holy Inquisition, were his King's two eyes, neither of which he could submit to have put out. Very well, said Oliver, then he was afraid he (Oliver) must damage those two eyes directly.

So, another fleet was despatched under two commanders, PENN and VENABLES, for Hispaniola; where, however, the Spaniards got the better of the fight. Consequently, the fleet came home again, after taking Jamaica on the way. Oliver, indignant with the two commanders who had not done what bold Admiral Blake would have done, clapped them both into prison, declared war against Spain, and made a treaty with France, in virtue of which it was to shelter the King and his brother the Duke of York no longer. Then, he sent a fleet abroad under bold Admiral Blake, which brought the King of Portugal to his senses—just to keep its hand in—and then engaged a Spanish fleet, sunk four great ships, and took two more, laden with silver to the value of two millions of pounds: which dazzling prize was brought from Portsmouth to London in waggons, with the populace of all the towns and villages through which the waggons passed, shouting with all their might. After this victory, bold Admiral Blake sailed away to the port of Santa Cruz to cut off the Spanish treasure-ships coming from Mexico. There, he found them, ten in number, with seven others to take care of them, and a big castle, and seven batteries, all roaring and blazing away at him with great guns. Blake cared no more for great guns than for pop-guns—no more for their hot iron balls than for snow-balls. He dashed into the harbour, captured and burnt every one of the ships, and came sailing out again triumphantly, with the victorious English flag flying at his mast-head. This was the last triumph of this great commander, who had sailed and fought until he was quite worn out. He died, as his successful ship was coming into Plymouth Harbour amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, and was buried in state in Westminster Abbey. Not to lie there, long.

Over and above all this, Oliver found that the VAUDOIS, or Protestant people of the valleys

of Lucerne, were insolently treated by the Catholic powers, and were even put to death for their religion, in an audacious and bloody manner. Instantly, he informed those powers that this was a thing which Protestant England would not allow; and he speedily carried his point, through the might of his great name, and established their right to worship God in peace after their own harmless manner.

Lastly, his English army won such admiration in fighting with the French against the Spaniards, that, after they had assaulted the town of Dunkirk together, the French King in person gave it up to the English, that it might be a token to them of their might and valour.

There were plots enough against Oliver among the frantic religionists (who called themselves Fifth Monarchy Men), and among the disappointed Republicans. He had a difficult game to play, for the Royalists were always ready to side with either party against him. The "King over the water," too, as Charles was called, had no scruples about plotting with any one against his life; although there is reason to suppose that he would willingly have married one of his daughters, if Oliver would have had such a son-in-law. There was a certain COLONEL SAXBY of the army, once a great supporter of Oliver's but now turned against him, who was a grievous trouble to him through all this part of his career; and who came and went between the discontented in England and Spain, and Charles who put himself in alliance with Spain on being thrown off by France. This man died in prison at last; but not until there had been very serious plots between the Royalists and Republicans, and an actual rising of them in England, when they burst into the city of Salisbury on a Sunday night, seized the judges who were going to hold the assizes there next day, and would have hanged them but for the merciful objections of the more temperate of their number. Oliver was so vigorous and shrewd that he soon put this revolt down, as he did most other conspiracies; and it was well for one of its chief managers—that same Lord Wilmot who had assisted in Charles's flight, and was now EARL OF ROCHESTER—that he made his escape. Oliver seemed to have eyes and ears everywhere, and secured such sources of information as his enemies little dreamed of. There was a chosen body of six persons, called the Sealed Knot, who were in the closest and most secret confidence of Charles. One of the foremost of these very men, a SIR RICHARD WILLIS, reported to Oliver everything that passed among them, and had two hundred a year for it.

MILES SYNDARCOMB, also of the old army, was another conspirator against the Protector. He and a man named CECIL, bribed one of his Life Guards to let them have good notice when he was going out—intending to shoot him from a window. But, owing either to his caution or his good fortune, they could never get an aim at him. Disappointed in this design, they got into the chapel in Whitehall, with a basketful of combustibles, which were to explode by means of a slow match in six hours; then in the noise and confusion of the fire, they hoped to kill Oliver. But, the Life Guardsman himself disclosed this plot; and they were seized, and Miles died (or killed himself in prison) a little while before he was ordered for execution. A few such plotters Oliver caused to be beheaded, a few more to be hanged, and many more, including those who rose in arms against him, to be sent as slaves to the West Indies. If he were rigid, he was impartial too, in asserting the laws of England. When a Portuguese nobleman, the brother of the Portuguese ambassador, killed a London citizen in mistake for another man with whom he had had a quarrel, Oliver caused him to be tried before a jury of Englishmen and foreigners, and had him executed in spite of the entreaties of all the ambassadors in London.

One of Oliver's own friends, the DUKE OF OLDENBURGH, in sending him a present of six fine coach-horses, was very near doing more to please the Royalists than all the plotters put together. One day, Oliver went with his coach, drawn by these six horses, into Hyde Park, to dine with his secretary and some of his other gentlemen under the trees there. After dinner, being merry, he took it into his head to put his friends inside and to drive them home: a postillion riding one of the foremost horses, as the custom was. On account of Oliver's being too free with the whip, the six fine horses went off at a gallop, the postillion got thrown, and Oliver fell upon the coach-pole and narrowly escaped being shot by his own pistol, which got entangled with his clothes in the harness, and went off. He was dragged some distance by the foot, until his foot came out of the shoe, and then he came safely to the ground under the broad body of the coach, and was very little the worse. The gentlemen inside were only bruised, and the discontented people of all parties were much disappointed.

The rest of the history of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell is a history of his Parliaments. His first one not pleasing him at all, he waited until the five months were out, and then dissolved it. The next was better suited to his

views; and from that he desired to get—if he could with safety to himself—the title of King. He had had this in his mind some time: whether because he thought that the English people, being more used to the title, were more likely to obey it; or whether because he really wished to be a King himself, and to leave the succession to that title in his family, is far from clear. He was already as high, in England and in all the world, as he would ever be, and I doubt if he cared for the mere name. However, a paper, called the “Humble Petition and Advice,” was presented to him by the House of Commons, praying him to take a high title and to appoint his successor. That he would have taken the title of King there is no doubt, but for the strong opposition of the army. This induced him to forbear, and to assent only to the other points of the petition. Upon which occasion there was another grand show in Westminster Hall, when the Speaker of the House of Commons formally invested him with a purple robe lined with ermine, and presented him with a splendidly bound Bible, and put a golden sceptre in his hand. The next time the Parliament met, he called a House of Lords of sixty members, as the petition gave him power to do; but as that Parliament did not please him either, and would not proceed to the business of the country, he jumped into a coach one morning, took six Guards with him, and sent them to the right-about. I wish this had been a warning to Parliaments to avoid long speeches, and do more work.

It was the month of August, one thousand six hundred and fifty-eight, when Oliver Cromwell's favourite daughter, ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE (who had lately lost her youngest son), lay very ill, and his mind was greatly troubled, because he loved her dearly. Another of his daughters was married to LORD FALCONBERG, another to the grandson of the Earl of Warwick, and he had made his son RICHARD one of the members of the Upper House. He was very kind and loving to them all, being a good father and a good husband; but he loved this daughter the best of the family, and went down to Hampton Court to see her, and could hardly be induced to stir from her sick room until she died. Although his religion had been of a gloomy kind, his disposition had been always cheerful. He had been fond of music in his home, and had kept open table once a week for all officers of the army not below the rank of captain, and had always preserved in his house a quiet sensible dignity. He encouraged men of genius and learning, and loved to have them about him.

MILTON was one of his great friends. He was good humoured too, with the nobility, whose dresses and manners were very different from his; and to show them what good information he had, he would sometimes jokingly tell them when they were his guests, where they had last drunk the health of the “King over the water,” and would recommend them to be more private (if they could) another time. But he had lived in busy times, had borne the weight of heavy State affairs, and had often gone in fear of his life. He was ill of the gout and ague; and when the death of his beloved child came upon him in addition, he sank, never to raise his head again. He told his physicians on the twenty-fourth of August that the Lord had assured him that he was not to die in that illness, and that he would certainly get better. This was only his sick fancy, for on the third of September, which was the anniversary of the great battle of Worcester, and the day of the year which he called his fortunate day, he died, in the sixtieth year of his age. He had been delirious, and had lain insensible some hours, but he had been overheard to murmur a very good prayer the day before. The whole country lamented his death. If you want to know the real worth of Oliver Cromwell, and his real services to his country, you can hardly do better than compare England under him, with England under CHARLES THE SECOND.

He had appointed his son Richard to succeed him, and after there had been, at Somerset House in the Strand, a lying in state more splendid than sensible—as all such vanities after death are, I think—Richard became Lord Protector. He was an amiable country gentleman, but had none of his father's great genius, and was quite unfit for such a post in such a storm of parties. Richard's Protectorate, which only lasted a year and a half, is a history of quarrels between the officers of the army and the Parliament, and between the officers among themselves; and of a growing discontent among the people, who had far too many long sermons and far too few amusements, and wanted a change. At last, General Monk got the army well into his own hands, and then in pursuance of a secret plan he seems to have entertained from the time of Oliver's death, declared for the King's cause. He did not do this openly; but, in his place in the House of Commons, as one of the members for Devonshire, strongly advocated the proposals of one SIR JOHN GREENVILLE, who came to the House with a letter from Charles, dated from Breda, and with whom he had previously been in secret communication.

There had been plots and counterplots, and a recall of the last members of the Long Parliament, and an end of the Long Parliament, and risings of the Royalists that were made too soon; and most men being tired out, and there being no one to head the country now great Oliver was dead, it was readily agreed to welcome Charles Stuart. Some of the wiser and better members said—what was most true—that in the letter from Breda, he gave no real promise to govern well, and that it would be best to make him pledge himself beforehand as to what he should be bound to do for the benefit of the kingdom. Monk said, however, it would be all right when he came, and he could not come too soon.

So, everybody found out all in a moment that the country *must* be prosperous and happy, having another Stuart to condescend to reign over it; and there was a prodigious firing off of guns, lighting of bonfires, ringing of bells, and throwing up of caps. The people drank the King's health by thousands in the open streets, and everybody rejoiced. Down came the Arms of the Commonwealth, up went the Royal Arms instead, and out came the public money. Fifty thousand pounds for the King, ten thousand pounds for his brother the Duke of York, five thousand pounds for his brother the Duke of Gloucester. Prayers for these gracious Stuarts were put up in all the churches; commissioners were sent to Holland (which suddenly found out that Charles was a great man, and that it loved him) to invite the King home; Monk and the Kentish grandees went to Dover, to kneel down before him as he landed. He kissed and embraced Monk, made him ride in the coach with himself and his brothers, came on to London amid wonderful shoutings, and passed through the army at Blackheath on the twenty-ninth of May (his birthday), in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty. Greeted by splendid dinners under tents, by flags and tapestry streaming from all the houses, by delighted crowds in all the streets, by troops of noblemen and gentlemen in rich dresses, by City companies, train-bands, drummers, trumpeters, the great Lord Mayor, and the majestic Aldermen, the King went on to Whitehall. On entering it, he commemorated his Restoration with the joke that it really would seem to have been his own fault that he had not come long ago, since everybody told him that he had always wished for him with all his heart.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ENGLAND UNDER CHARLES THE SECOND, CALLED THE MERRY MONARCH.

THERE never were such profligate times in England as under Charles the Second. Whenever you see his portrait, with his swarthy ill-looking face and great nose, you may fancy him in his Court at Whitehall, surrounded by some of the very worst vagabonds in the kingdom (though they were lords and ladies), drinking, gambling, indulging in vicious conversation, and committing every kind of profligate excess. It has been a fashion to call Charles the Second "The Merry Monarch." Let me try to give you a general idea of some of the merry things that were done, in the merry days when this merry gentleman sat upon his merry throne, in merry England.

The first merry proceeding was—of course—to declare that he was one of the greatest, the wisest, and the noblest kings that ever shone, like the blessed sun itself, on this benighted earth. The next merry and pleasant piece of business was, for the Parliament, in the humblest manner, to give him one million two hundred thousand pounds a year, and to settle upon him for life that old disputed tonnage and poundage which had been so bravely fought for. Then, General Monk, being made EARL OF ALBEMARLE, and a few other Royalists similarly rewarded, the law went to work to see what was to be done to those persons (they were called Regicides) who had been concerned in making a martyr of the late King. Ten of these were merrily executed; that is to say, six of the judges, one of the council, Colonel Hacker and another officer who had commanded the Guards, and HUGH PETERS, a preacher who had preached against the martyr with all his heart. These executions were so extremely merry, that every horrible circumstance which Cromwell had abandoned was revived with appalling cruelty. The hearts of the sufferers were torn out of their living bodies; their bowels were burned before their faces; the executioner cut jokes to the next victim, as he rubbed his filthy hands together, that were reeking with the blood of the last; and the heads of the dead were drawn on sledges with the living to the place of suffering. Still, even so merry a monarch could not force one of these dying men to say that he was sorry for what he had done. Nay, the most memorable thing said among them was, that if the thing were to do again they would do it.

Sir Harry Vane, who had furnished the evidence against Strafford, and was one of the most staunch of the Republicans, was also tried, found guilty, and ordered for execution. When he came upon the scaffold on Tower Hill, after conducting his own defence with great power, his notes of what he had meant to say to the people were torn away from him, and the drums and trumpets were ordered to sound lustily and drown his voice; for, the people had been so much impressed by what the Regicides had calmly said with their last breath, that it was the custom now, to have the drums and trumpets always under the scaffold, ready to strike up. Vane said no more than this: "It is a bad cause which cannot bear the words of a dying man:" and bravely died.

These merry scenes were succeeded by another, perhaps even merrier. On the anniversary of the late King's death, the bodies of Oliver Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, were torn out of their graves in Westminster Abbey, dragged to Tyburn, hanged there on a gallows all day long, and then beheaded. Imagine the head of Oliver Cromwell set upon a pole to be stared at by a brutal crowd, not one of whom would have dared to look the living Oliver in the face for half a moment! Think, after you have read this reign, what England was under Oliver Cromwell who was torn out of his grave, and what it was under this merry monarch who sold it, like a merry Judas, over and over again.

Of course, the remains of Oliver's wife and daughter were not to be spared either, though they had been most excellent women. The base clergy of that time gave up their bodies, which had been buried in the Abbey, and—to the eternal disgrace of England—they were thrown into a pit, together with the mouldering bones of Pym and of the brave and bold old Admiral Blake.

The clergy acted this disgraceful part because they hoped to get the nonconformists, or dissenters, thoroughly put down in this reign, and to have but one prayer-book and one service for all kinds of people, no matter what their private opinions were. This was pretty well, I think, for a Protestant Church, which had displaced the Romish Church because people had a right to their own opinions in religious matters. However, they carried it with a high hand, and a prayer-book was agreed upon, in which the extreme opinions of Archbishop Laud were not forgotten. An Act was passed, too, preventing any dissenter from holding any office under any corporation. So, the regular clergy in their triumph were soon as merry as the King. The army being by this time disbanded, and the

King crowned, everything was to go on easily for evermore.

I must say a word here about the King's family. He had not been long upon the throne when his brother the Duke of Gloucester, and his sister the PRINCESS OF ORANGE, died within a few months of each other, of small-pox. His remaining sister, the PRINCESS HENRIETTA, married the DUKE OF ORLEANS, the brother of LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH, King of France. His brother JAMES, DUKE OF YORK, was made High Admiral, and by-and-by became a Catholic. He was a gloomy sullen bilious sort of man, with a remarkable partiality for the ugliest women in the country. He married, under very discreditable circumstances, ANNE HYDE, the daughter of LORD CLARENDON, then the King's principal Minister—not at all a delicate minister either, but doing much of the dirty work of a very dirty palace. It became important now that the King himself should be married; and divers foreign Monarchs, not very particular about the character of their son-in-law, proposed their daughters to him. The KING OF PORTUGAL offered his daughter CATHERINE OF BRAGANZA, and fifty thousand pounds: in addition to which, the French King, who was favourable to that match, offered a loan of another fifty thousand. The King of Spain, on the other hand, offered any one out of a dozen of Princesses, and other hopes of gain. But the ready money carried the day, and Catherine came over in state to her merry marriage.

The whole Court was a great flaunting crowd of debauched men and shameless women; and Catherine's merry husband insulted and outraged her in every possible way, until she consented to receive those worthless creatures as her very good friends, and to degrade herself by their companionship. A MRS. PALMER, whom the King made LADY CASTLEMAINE, and afterwards DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND, was one of the most powerful of the bad women about the Court, and had great influence with the King nearly all through his reign. Another merry lady named MOLL DAVIES, a dancer at the theatre, was afterwards her rival. So was NELL GWYN, first an orange girl and then an actress, who really had good in her, and of whom one of the worst things I know is, that actually she does seem to have been fond of the King. The first DUKE OF ST. ALBANS was this orange girl's child. In like manner the son of a merry waiting-lady, whom the King created DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH, became the DUKE OF RICHMOND. Upon the whole it is not so bad a thing to be a commoner.

The Merry Monarch was so exceedingly merry among these merry ladies, and some equally merry (and equally infamous) lords and gentlemen, that he soon got through his hundred thousand pounds, and then, by way of raising a little pocket-money, made a merry bargain. He sold Dunkirk to the French King for five millions of livres. When I think of the dignity to which Oliver Cromwell raised England in the eyes of foreign powers, and when I think of the manner in which he gained for England this very Dunkirk, I am much inclined to consider that if the Merry Monarch had been made to follow his father for this action, he would have received his just deserts.

Though he was like his father in none of that father's greater qualities, he was like him in being worthy of no trust. When he sent that letter to the Parliament, from Breda, he did expressly promise that all sincere religious opinions should be respected. Yet he was no sooner firm in his power than he consented to one of the worst Acts of Parliament ever passed. Under this law, every minister who should not give his solemn assent to the Prayer-Book by a certain day, was declared to be a minister no longer, and to be deprived of his church. The consequence of this was that some two thousand honest men were taken from their congregations, and reduced to dire poverty and distress. It was followed by another outrageous law, called the *Conventicle Act*, by which any person above the age of sixteen who was present at any religious service not according to the Prayer-Book, was to be imprisoned three months for the first offence, six for the second, and to be transported for the third. This Act alone filled the prisons, which were then most dreadful dungeons, to overflowing.

The Covenanters in Scotland had already fared no better. A base Parliament, usually known as the *Drunken Parliament*, in consequence of its principal members being seldom sober, had been got together to make laws against the Covenanters, and to force all men to be of one mind in religious matters. The *MARQUIS OF ARGYLE*, relying on the King's honour, had given himself up to him; but, he was wealthy, and his enemies wanted his wealth. He was tried for treason, on the evidence of some private letters in which he had expressed opinions—as well he might—more favourable to the government of the late Lord Protector than of the present merry and religious King. He was executed, as were two men of mark among the Covenanters; and *SHARP*, a traitor who had once been the friend

of the Presbyterians and betrayed them, was made Archbishop of St. Andrew's, to teach the Scotch how to like bishops.

Things being in this merry state at home, the Merry Monarch undertook a war with the Dutch; principally because they interfered with an African company, established with the two objects of buying gold-dust and slaves, of which the Duke of York was a leading member. After some preliminary hostilities, the said Duke sailed to the coast of Holland with a fleet of ninety-eight vessels of war, and four fire-ships. This engaged with the Dutch fleet, of no fewer than one hundred and thirteen ships. In the great battle between the two forces, the Dutch lost eighteen ships, four admirals, and seven thousand men. But, the English on shore were in no mood of exultation when they heard the news.

For, this was the year and the time of the Great Plague in London. During the winter of one thousand six hundred and sixty-four it had been whispered about, that some few people had died here and there of the disease called the Plague, in some of the unwholesome suburbs around London. News was not published at that time as it is now, and some people believed these rumours, and some disbelieved them, and they were soon forgotten. But, in the month of May, one thousand six hundred and sixty-five, it began to be said all over the town that the disease had burst out with great violence in St. Giles's, and that the people were dying in great numbers. This soon turned out to be awfully true. The roads out of London were choked up by people endeavouring to escape from the infected city, and large sums were paid for any kind of conveyance. The disease soon spread so fast, that it was necessary to shut up the houses in which sick people were, and to cut them off from communication with the living. Every one of these houses was marked on the outside of the door with a red cross, and the words, *Lord, have mercy upon us!* The streets were all deserted, grass grew in the public ways, and there was a dreadful silence in the air. When night came on, dismal rumblings used to be heard, and these were the wheels of the death-carts, attended by men with veiled faces and holding cloths to their mouths, who rang doleful bells and cried in a loud and solemn voice, "*Bring out your dead!*" The corpses put into these carts were buried by torchlight in great pits; no service being performed over them; all men being afraid to stay for a moment on the brink of the ghastly graves. In the general fear, children ran away from their

parents, and parents from their children. Some who were taken ill, died alone, and without any help. Some were stabbed or strangled by hired nurses who robbed them of all their money, and stole the very beds on which they lay. Some went mad, dropped from the windows, ran through the streets, and in their pain and frenzy flung themselves into the river.

These were not all the horrors of the time. The wicked and dissolute, in wild desperation, sat in the taverns singing roaring songs, and were stricken as they drank, and went out and died. The fearful and superstitious persuaded themselves that they saw supernatural sights—burning swords in the sky, gigantic arms and darts. Others pretended that at nights vast crowds of ghosts walked round and round the dismal pits. One madman, naked, and carrying a brazier full of burning coals upon his head, stalked through the streets, crying out that he was a Prophet, commissioned to denounce the vengeance of the Lord on wicked London. Another always went to and fro, exclaiming, "Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed!" A third awoke the echoes in the dismal streets, by night and by day, and made the blood of the sick run cold, by calling out incessantly, in a deep hoarse voice, "O, the great and dreadful God!"

Through the months of July and August and September, the Great Plague raged more and more. Great fires were lighted in the streets, in the hope of stopping the infection; but there was a plague of rain too, and it beat the fires out. At last, the winds which usually arise at that time of the year which is called the equinox, when day and night are of equal length all over the world, began to blow, and to purify the wretched town. The deaths began to decrease, the red crosses slowly to disappear, the fugitives to return, the shops to open, pale frightened faces to be seen in the streets. The Plague had been in every part of England, but in close and unwholesome London it had killed one hundred thousand people.

All this time, the Merry Monarch was as merry as ever, and as worthless as ever. All this time, the debauched lords and gentlemen and the shameless ladies danced and gamed and drank, and loved and hated one another, according to their merry ways. So little humanity did the government learn from the late affliction, that one of the first things the Parliament did when it met at Oxford (being as yet afraid to come to London), was to make a law, called the Five Mile Act, expressly directed against those poor ministers, who, in the time of the Plague, had manfully come back to

comfort the unhappy people. This infamous law, by forbidding them to teach in any school, or to come within five miles of any city, town, or village, doomed them to starvation and death.

The fleet had been at sea, and healthy. The King of France was now in alliance with the Dutch, though his navy was chiefly employed in looking on while the English and Dutch fought. The Dutch gained one victory; and the English gained another and a greater; and Prince Rupert, one of the English admirals, was out in the Channel one windy night, looking for the French Admiral, with the intention of giving him something more to do than he had had yet, when the gale increased to a storm, and blew him into Saint Helen's. That night was the third of September, one thousand six hundred and sixty-six, and that wind fanned the Great Fire of London.

It broke out at a baker's shop near London Bridge, on the spot on which the Monument now stands as a remembrance of those raging flames. It spread and spread, and burned and burned, for three days. The nights were lighter than the days; in the day-time there was an immense cloud of smoke, and in the night-time there was a great tower of fire mounting up into the sky, which lighted the whole country landscape for ten miles round. Showers of hot ashes rose into the air and fell on distant places; flying sparks carried the conflagration to great distances, and kindled it in twenty new spots at a time; church steeples fell down with tremendous crashes; houses crumbled into cinders by the hundred and the thousand. The summer had been intensely hot and dry, the streets were very narrow, and the houses mostly built of wood and plaster. Nothing could stop the tremendous fire, but the want of more houses to burn; nor did it stop until the whole way from the Tower to Temple Bar was a desert, composed of the ashes of thirteen thousand houses and eighty-nine churches.

This was a terrible visitation at the time, and occasioned great loss and suffering to the two hundred thousand burnt-out people, who were obliged to lie in the fields under the open night sky, or in hastily-made huts of mud and straw, while the lanes and roads were rendered impassable by carts which had broken down as they tried to save their goods. But the Fire was a great blessing to the City afterwards, for it arose from its ruins very much improved—built more regularly, more widely, more cleanly and carefully, and therefore much more healthily. It might be far more healthy than it is, but there are some people in it still—even now, at this

time, nearly two hundred years later—so selfish, so pig-headed, and so ignorant, that I doubt if even another Great Fire would warm them up to do their duty.

The Catholics were accused of having wilfully set London in flames; one poor Frenchman, who had been mad for years, even accused himself of having with his own hand fired the first house. There is no reasonable doubt, however, that the fire was accidental. An inscription on the Monument long attributed it to the Catholics; but it is removed now, and was always a malicious and stupid untruth.

SECOND PART.

THAT the Merry Monarch might be very merry indeed, in the merry times when his people were suffering under pestilence and fire, he drank and gambled and flung away among his favourites the money which the Parliament had voted for the war. The consequence of this was that the stout-hearted English sailors were merrily starving of want, and dying in the streets; while the Dutch, under their admirals DE WITT and DE RUYTER, came into the River Thames, and up the River Medway as far as Upnor, burned the guard-ships, silenced the weak batteries, and did what they would to the English coast for six whole weeks. Most of the English ships that could have prevented them had neither powder nor shot on board; in this merry reign, public officers made themselves 'as merry as the King did with the public money; and when it was entrusted to them to spend in national defences or preparations, they put it into their own pockets with the merriest grace in the world.

Lord Clarendon had, by this time, run as long a course as is usually allotted to the unscrupulous ministers of bad kings. He was impeached by his political opponents, but unsuccessfully. The King then commanded him to withdraw from England and retire to France, which he did, after defending himself in writing. He was no great loss at home, and died abroad some seven years afterwards.

There then came into power a ministry called the Cabal Ministry, because it was composed of LORD CLIFFORD, the EARL OF ARLINGTON, the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (a great rascal, and the King's most powerful favourite), LORD ASHLEY, and the DUKE OF LAUDERDALE, C. A. B. A. L. As the French were making conquests in Flanders, the first Cabal proceeding was to make a treaty with the Dutch, for uniting with Spain to oppose

the French. It was no sooner made than the Merry Monarch, who always wanted to get money without being accountable to a Parliament for his expenditure, apologised to the King of France for having had anything to do with it, and concluded a secret treaty with him, making himself his infamous pensioner to the amount of two millions of livres down, and three millions more a year; and engaging to desert that very Spain, to make war against those very Dutch, and to declare himself a Catholic when a convenient time should arrive. This religious king had lately been crying to his Catholic brother on the subject of his strong desire to be a Catholic; and now he merrily concluded this treasonable conspiracy against the country he governed, by undertaking to become one as soon as he safely could. For all of which, though he had had ten merry heads instead of one, he richly deserved to lose them by the headsman's axe.

As his one merry head might have been far from safe, if these things had been known, they were kept very quiet, and war was declared by France and England against the Dutch. But, a very uncommon man, afterwards most important to English history and to the religion and liberty of this land, arose among them, and for many long years defeated the whole projects of France. This was WILLIAM OF NASSAU, PRINCE OF ORANGE, son of the last Prince of Orange of the same name, who married the daughter of Charles the First of England. He was a young man at this time, only just of age; but he was brave, cool, intrepid, and wise. His father had been so detested that, upon his death, the Dutch had abolished the authority to which this son would have otherwise succeeded (Stadtholder it was called), and placed the chief power in the hands of JOHN DE WITT, who educated this young prince. Now, the Prince became very popular, and John de Witt's brother CORNELIUS was sentenced to banishment on a false accusation of conspiring to kill him. John went to the prison where he was, to take him away to exile, in his coach; and a great mob who collected on the occasion, then and there cruelly murdered both the brothers. This left the government in the hands of the Prince, who was really the choice of the nation; and from this time he exercised it with the greatest vigour, against the whole power of France, under its famous generals CONDÉ and TURENNE, and in support of the Protestant religion. It was full seven years before this war ended in a treaty of peace made at Nimeguen, and its details would occupy a very considerable space. It is enough to say that William of Orange established a famous

character with the whole world; and that the Merry Monarch, adding to and improving on his former baseness, bound himself to do everything the King of France liked, and nothing the King of France did not like, for a pension of one hundred thousand pounds a year, which was afterwards doubled. Besides this, the King of France, by means of his corrupt ambassador—who wrote accounts of his proceedings in England, which are not always to be believed, I think—bought our English members of Parliament, as he wanted them. So, in point of fact, during a considerable portion of this merry reign, the King of France was the real King of this country.

But there was a better time to come, and it was to come (though his royal uncle little thought so) through that very William, Prince of Orange. He came over to England, saw Mary, the elder daughter of the Duke of York, and married her. We shall see by-and-by what came of that marriage, and why it is never to be forgotten.

This daughter was a Protestant, but her mother died a Catholic. She and her sister ANNE, also a Protestant, were the only survivors of eight children. Anne afterwards married GEORGE, PRINCE OF DENMARK, brother to the King of that country.

Lest you should do the Merry Monarch the injustice of supposing that he was even good humoured (except when he had everything his own way), or that he was high spirited and honourable, I will mention here what was done to a member of the House of Commons, SIR JOHN COVENTRY. He made a remark in a debate about taxing the theatres, which gave the King offence. The King agreed with his illegitimate son, who had been born abroad, and whom he had made DUKE OF MONMOUTH, to take the following merry vengeance. To waylay him at night, fifteen armed men to one, and to slit his nose with a penknife. Like master, like man. The King's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, was strongly suspected of setting on an assassin to murder the DUKE OF ORMOND as he was returning home from a dinner; and that Duke's spirited son, LORD OSSORY, was so persuaded of his guilt, that he said to him at Court, even as he stood beside the King, "My lord, I know very well that you are at the bottom of this late attempt upon my father. But I give you warning, if he ever come to a violent end, his blood shall be upon you, and wherever I meet you I will pistol you! I will do so, though I find you standing behind the King's chair; and I tell you this in his Majesty's presence, that you may be quite sure of my

doing what I threaten." Those were merry times indeed.

There was a fellow named BLOOD, who was seized for making, with two companions, an audacious attempt to steal the crown, the globe, and sceptre, from the place where the jewels were kept in the Tower. This robber, who was a swaggering ruffian, being taken, declared that he was the man who had endeavoured to kill the Duke of Ormond, and that he had meant to kill the King too, but was overawed by the majesty of his appearance, when he might otherwise have done it, as he was bathing at Battersea. The King being but an ill-looking fellow, I don't believe a word of this. Whether he was flattered, or whether he knew that Buckingham had really set Blood on to murder the Duke, is uncertain. But it is quite certain that he pardoned this thief, gave him an estate of five hundred a year in Ireland (which had had the honour of giving him birth), and presented him at Court to the debauched lords and the shameless ladies, who made a great deal of him—as I have no doubt they would have made of the Devil himself, if the King had introduced him.

Infamously pensioned as he was, the King still wanted money, and consequently was obliged to call Parliaments. In these, the great object of the Protestants was to thwart the Catholic Duke of York, who married a second time; his new wife being a young lady only fifteen years old, the Catholic sister of the DUKE OF MODENA. In this they were seconded by the Protestant Dissenters, though to their own disadvantage: since, to exclude Catholics from power, they were even willing to exclude themselves. The King's object was to pretend to be a Protestant, while he was really a Catholic; to swear to the Bishops that he was devoutly attached to the English Church, while he knew he had bargained it away to the King of France; and by cheating and deceiving them, and all who were attached to royalty, to become despotic and be powerful enough to confess what a rascal he was. Meantime the King of France, knowing his merry pensioner well, intrigued with the King's opponents in Parliament, as well as with the King and his friends.

The fears that the country had of the Catholic religion being restored, if the Duke of York should come to the throne, and the low cunning of the King in pretending to share their alarms, led to some very terrible results. A certain DR. TONGE, a dull clergyman in the City, fell into the hands of a certain TITUS OATES, a most infamous character, who pretended to have acquired among the Jesuits abroad a knowledge

of a great plot for the murder of the King, and the re-establishment of the Catholic religion. Titus Oates being produced by this unlucky Dr. Tonge and solemnly examined before the council, contradicted himself in a thousand ways, told the most ridiculous and improbable stories, and implicated COLEMAN, the Secretary of the Duchess of York. Now, although what he charged against Coleman was not true, and although you and I know very well that the real dangerous Catholic plot was that one with the King of France of which the Merry Monarch was himself the head, there happened to be found among Coleman's papers, some letters, in which he did praise the days of Bloody Queen Mary, and abuse the Protestant religion. This was great good fortune for Titus, as it seemed to confirm him; but better still was in store. SIR EDMUNDBURY GODFREY, the magistrate who had first examined him, being unexpectedly found dead near Primrose Hill, was confidently believed to have been killed by the Catholics. I think there is no doubt that he had been melancholy mad, and that he killed himself; but he had a great Protestant funeral, and Titus was called the Saver of the Nation, and received a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year.

As soon as Oates's wickedness had met with this success, up started another villain, named WILLIAM BEDLOE, who, attracted by a reward of five hundred pounds offered for the apprehension of the murderers of Godfrey, came forward and charged two Jesuits and some other persons with having committed it at the Queen's desire. Oates, going into partnership with this new informer, had the audacity to accuse the poor Queen herself of high treason. Then appeared a third informer, as bad as either of the two, and accused a Catholic banker named STAYLEY of having said that the King was the greatest rogue in the world (which would not have been far from the truth), and that he would kill him with his own hand. This banker, being at once tried and executed, Coleman and two others were tried and executed. Then, a miserable wretch named PRANCE, a Catholic silversmith, being accused by Bedloe, was tortured into confessing that he had taken part in Godfrey's murder, and into accusing three other men of having committed it. Then, five Jesuits were accused by Oates, Bedloe, and Prance together, and were all found guilty, and executed on the same kind of contradictory and absurd evidence. The Queen's physician and three monks were next put on their trial; but Oates and Bedloe had for the time gone far enough, and these four

were acquitted. The public mind, however, was so full of a Catholic plot, and so strong against the Duke of York, that James consented to obey a written order from his brother, and to go with his family to Brussels, provided that his rights should never be sacrificed in his absence to the Duke of Monmouth. The House of Commons, not satisfied with this as the King hoped, passed a bill to exclude the Duke from ever succeeding to the throne. In return, the King dissolved the Parliament. He had deserted his old favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, who was now in the opposition.

To give any sufficient idea of the miseries of Scotland in this merry reign, would occupy a hundred pages. Because the people would not have bishops, and were resolved to stand by their Solemn League and Covenant, such cruelties were inflicted upon them as make the blood run cold. Ferocious dragoons galloped through the country to punish the peasants for deserting the churches; sons were hanged up at their fathers' doors for refusing to disclose where their fathers were concealed; wives were tortured to death for not betraying their husbands; people were taken out of their fields and gardens, and shot on the public roads without trial; lighted matches were tied to the fingers of prisoners, and a most horrible torment called the Boot was invented, and constantly applied, which ground and mashed the victims' legs with iron wedges. Witnesses were tortured as well as prisoners. All the prisons were full; all the gibbets were heavy with bodies; murder and plunder devastated the whole country. In spite of all, the Covenanters were by no means to be dragged into the churches, and persisted in worshipping God as they thought right. A body of ferocious Highlanders, turned upon them from the mountains of their own country, had no greater effect than the English dragoons under GRAHAME OF CLAVERHOUSE, the most cruel and rapacious of all their enemies, whose name will ever be cursed through the length and breadth of Scotland. Archbishop Sharp had ever aided and abetted all these outrages. But he fell at last; for when the injuries of the Scottish people were at their height, he was seen, in his coach-and-six coming across a moor, by a body of men, headed by one JOHN BALFOUR, who were waiting for another of their oppressors. Upon this they cried out that Heaven had delivered him into their hands, and killed him with many wounds. If ever a man deserved such a death, I think Archbishop Sharp did.

It made a great noise directly, and the Merry Monarch—strongly suspected of having goaded

the Scottish people on, that he might have an excuse for a greater army than the Parliament were willing to give him—sent down his son, the Duke of Monmouth, as commander-in-chief, with instructions to attack the Scottish rebels, or Whigs as they were called, whenever he came up with them. Marching with ten thousand men from Edinburgh, he found them, in number four or five thousand, drawn up at Bothwell Bridge, by the Clyde. They were soon dispersed; and Monmouth showed a more humane character towards them, than he had shown towards that Member of Parliament whose nose he had caused to be slit with a penknife. But the Duke of Lauderdale was their bitter foe, and sent Claverhouse to finish them.

As the Duke of York became more and more unpopular, the Duke of Monmouth became more and more popular. It would have been decent in the latter not to have voted in favour of the renewed bill for the exclusion of James from the throne; but he did so, much to the King's amusement, who used to sit in the House of Lords by the fire, hearing the debates, which he said were as good as a play. The House of Commons passed the bill by a large majority, and it was carried up to the House of Lords by LORD RUSSELL, one of the best of the leaders on the Protestant side. It was rejected there, chiefly because the bishops helped the King to get rid of it; and the fear of Catholic plots revived again. There had been another got up, by a fellow out of Newgate, named DANGERFIELD, which is more famous than it deserves to be, under the name of the MEAL-TUB PLOT. This jail-bird having been got out of Newgate by a MRS. CELLIER, a Catholic nurse, had turned Catholic himself, and pretended that he knew of a plot among the Presbyterians against the King's life. This was very pleasant to the Duke of York, who hated the Presbyterians, who returned the compliment. He gave Dangerfield twenty guineas, and sent him to the King his brother. But Dangerfield, breaking down altogether in his charge, and being sent back to Newgate, almost astonished the Duke out of his five senses by suddenly swearing that the Catholic nurse had put that false design into his head, and that what he really knew about, was, a Catholic plot against the King; the evidence of which would be found in some papers, concealed in a meal-tub in Mrs. Cellier's house. There they were, of course—for he had put them there himself—and so the tub gave the name to the plot. But, the nurse was acquitted on her trial, and it came to nothing.

Lord Ashley, of the Cabal, was now Lord

Shaftesbury, and was strong against the succession of the Duke of York. The House of Commons, aggravated to the utmost extent, as we may well suppose, by suspicions of the King's conspiracy with the King of France, made a desperate point of the exclusion still, and were bitter against the Catholics generally. So unjustly bitter were they, I grieve to say, that they impeached the venerable Lord Stafford, a Catholic nobleman seventy years old, of a design to kill the King. The witnesses were that atrocious Oates and two other birds of the same feather. He was found guilty, on evidence quite as foolish as it was false, and was beheaded on Tower Hill. The people were opposed to him when he first appeared upon the scaffold; but, when he had addressed them and shown them how innocent he was and how wickedly he was sent there, their better nature was aroused, and they said, "We believe you, my Lord. God bless you, my Lord!"

The House of Commons refused to let the King have any money until he should consent to the Exclusion Bill; but, as he could get it and did get it from his master the King of France, he could afford to hold them very cheap. He called a Parliament at Oxford, to which he went down with a great show of being armed and protected as if he were in danger of his life, and to which the opposition members also went armed and protected, alleging that they were in fear of the Papists, who were numerous among the King's guards. However, they went on with the Exclusion Bill, and were so earnest upon it that they would have carried it again, if the King had not popped his crown and state robes into a sedan-chair, bundled himself into it along with them, hurried down to the chamber where the House of Lords met, and dissolved the Parliament. After which he scampered home, and the members of Parliament scampered home too, as fast as their legs could carry them.

The Duke of York, then residing in Scotland, had, under the law which excluded Catholics from public trust, no right whatever to public employment. Nevertheless, he was openly employed as the King's representative in Scotland, and there gratified his sullen and cruel nature to his heart's content by directing the dreadful cruelties against the Covenanters. There were two ministers named CARGILL and CAMERON who had escaped from the battle of Bothwell Bridge, and who returned to Scotland, and raised the miserable but still brave and unsubdued Covenanters afresh, under the name of Cameronians. As Cameron publicly posted a declaration that the King was a forsworn

tyrant, no mercy was shown to his unhappy followers after he was slain in battle. The Duke of York, who was particularly fond of the Boot and derived great pleasure from having it applied, offered their lives to some of these people, if they would cry on the scaffold "God save the King!" But their relations, friends, and countrymen had been so barbarously tortured and murdered in this merry reign, that they preferred to die, and did die. The Duke then obtained his merry brother's permission to hold a Parliament in Scotland, which first, with most shameless deceit, confirmed the laws for securing the Protestant religion against Popery, and then declared that nothing must or should prevent the succession of the Popish Duke. After this double-faced beginning, it established an oath which no human being could understand, but which everybody was to take, as a proof that his religion was the lawful religion. The Earl of Argyle, taking it with the explanation that he did not consider it to prevent him from favouring any alteration either in the Church or State which was not inconsistent with the Protestant religion or with his loyalty, was tried for high treason before a Scottish jury, of which the MARQUIS OF MONTROSE was foreman, and was found guilty. He escaped the scaffold, for that time, by getting away, in the disguise of a page, in the train of his daughter, LADY SOPHIA LINDSAY. It was absolutely proposed, by certain members of the Scottish Council, that this lady should be whipped through the streets of Edinburgh. But this was too much even for the Duke, who had the manliness then (he had very little at most times) to remark that Englishmen were not accustomed to treat ladies in that manner. In those merry times nothing could equal the brutal servility of the Scottish fawners, but the conduct of similar degraded beings in England.

After the settlement of these little affairs, the Duke returned to England, and soon resumed his place at the Council, and his office of High Admiral—all this by his brother's favour, and in open defiance of the law. It would have been no loss to the country, if he had been drowned when his ship, in going to Scotland to fetch his family, struck on a sand-bank, and was lost with two hundred souls on board. But he escaped in a boat with some friends; and the sailors were so brave and unselfish, that, when they saw him rowing away, they gave three cheers, while they themselves were going down for ever.

The Merry Monarch, having got rid of his Parliament, went to work to make himself despotic, with all speed. Having had the villainy to order the execution of OLIVER PLUNKET,

BISHOP OF ARMAGH, falsely accused of a plot to establish Popery in that country by means of a French army—the very thing this royal traitor was himself trying to do at home—and having tried to ruin Lord Shaftesbury, and failed—he turned his hand to controlling the corporations all over the country; because, if he could only do that, he could get what juries he chose, to bring in perjured verdicts, and could get what members he chose, returned to Parliament. These merry times produced, and made Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, a drunken ruffian of the name of JEFFREYS; a red-faced swollen bloated horrible creature, with a bullying roaring voice, and a more savage nature perhaps than was ever lodged in any human breast. This monster was the Merry Monarch's especial favourite, and he testified his admiration of him by giving him a ring from his own finger, which the people used to call Judge Jeffreys's Blood-stone. Him the King employed to go about and bully the corporations; beginning with London; or, as Jeffreys himself elegantly called it, "to give them a lick with the rough side of his tongue." And he did it so thoroughly, that they soon became the basest and most sycophantic bodies in the kingdom—except the University of Oxford, which, in that respect, was quite pre-eminent and unapproachable.

Lord Shaftesbury (who died soon after the King's failure against him), LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL, the Duke of Monmouth, LORD HOWARD, LORD JERSEY, ALGERNON SIDNEY, JOHN HAMPDEN (grandson of the great Hampden), and some others, used to hold a council together after the dissolution of the Parliament, arranging what it might be necessary to do, if the King carried his Popish plot to the utmost height. Lord Shaftesbury having been much the most violent of this party, brought two violent men into their secrets—RUMSEY, who had been a soldier in the Republican army; and WEST, a lawyer. These two knew an old officer of Cromwell's, called RUMBOLD, who had married a maltster's widow, and so had come into possession of a solitary dwelling called the Rye House, near Hoddesdon, in Hertfordshire. Rumbold said to them what a capital place this house of his would be from which to shoot at the King, who often passed there going to and fro from Newmarket. They liked the idea, and entertained it. But, one of their body gave information; and they, together with SHEPHERD a wine merchant, Lord Russell, Algernon Sidney, LORD ESSEX, LORD HOWARD, and Hampden, were all arrested.

Lord Russell might have easily escaped, but scorned to do so, being innocent of any wrong ; Lord Essex might have easily escaped, but scorned to do so, lest his flight should prejudice Lord Russell. But it weighed upon his mind that he had brought into their council, Lord Howard—who now turned a miserable traitor—against a great dislike Lord Russell had always had of him. He could not bear the reflection, and destroyed himself before Lord Russell was brought to trial at the Old Bailey.

He knew very well that he had nothing to hope, having always been manful in the Protestant cause against the two false brothers, the one on the throne, and the other standing next to it. He had a wife, one of the noblest and best of women, who acted as his secretary on his trial, who comforted him in his prison, who supped with him on the night before he died, and whose love and virtue and devotion have made her name imperishable. Of course, he was found guilty, and was sentenced to be beheaded in Lincoln's Inn-fields, not many yards from his own house. When he had parted from his children on the evening before his death, his wife still stayed with him until ten o'clock at night ; and when their final separation in this world was over, and he had kissed her many times, he still sat for a long while in his prison, talking of her goodness. Hearing the rain fall fast at that time, he calmly said, "Such a rain to-morrow will spoil a great show, which is a dull thing on a rainy day." At midnight he went to bed, and slept till four ; even when his servant called him, he fell asleep again while his clothes were being made ready. He rode to the scaffold in his own carriage, attended by two famous clergymen, TILLOTSON and BURNET, and sang a psalm to himself very softly, as he went along. He was as quiet and as steady as if he had been going out for an ordinary ride. After saying that he was surprised to see so great a crowd, he laid down his head upon the block, as if upon the pillow of his bed, and had it struck off at the second blow. His noble wife was busy for him even then ; for that true-hearted lady printed and widely circulated his last words, of which he had given her a copy. They made the blood of all the honest men in England boil.

The University of Oxford distinguished itself on the very same day by pretending to believe that the accusation against Lord Russell was true, and by calling the King, in a written paper, the Breath of their Nostrils and the Anointed of the Lord. This paper the Parliament afterwards caused to be burned by the common hang-

man ; which I am sorry for, as I wish it had been framed and glazed and hung up in some public place, as a monument of baseness for the scorn of mankind.

Next, came the trial of Algernon Sidney, at which Jeffreys presided, like a great crimson toad, sweltering and swelling with rage. "I pray God, Mr. Sidney," said this Chief Justice of a merry reign, after passing sentence, "to work in you a temper fit to go to the other world, for I see you are not fit for this." "My lord," said the prisoner, composedly holding out his arm, "feel my pulse, and see if I be disordered. I thank Heaven I never was in better temper than I am now." Algernon Sidney was executed on Tower Hill, on the seventh of December, one thousand six hundred and eighty-three. He died a hero, and died, in his own words, "For that good old cause in which he had been engaged from his youth, and for which God had so often and so wonderfully declared himself."

The Duke of Monmouth had been making his uncle, the Duke of York, very jealous, by going about the country in a royal sort of way, playing at the people's games, becoming god-father to their children, and even touching for the King's evil, or stroking the faces of the sick to cure them—though, for the matter of that, I should say he did them about as much good as any crowned king could have done. His father had got him to write a letter, confessing his having had a part in the conspiracy, for which Lord Russell had been beheaded ; but he was ever a weak man, and as soon as he had written it, he was ashamed of it and got it back again. For this, he was banished to the Netherlands ; but he soon returned and had an interview with his father, unknown to his uncle. It would seem that he was coming into the Merry Monarch's favour again, and that the Duke of York was sliding out of it, when Death appeared to the merry galleries at Whitehall, and astonished the debauched lords and gentlemen, and the shameless ladies, very considerably.

On Monday, the second of February, one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, the merry pensioner and servant of the King of France fell down in a fit of apoplexy. By the Wednesday his case was hopeless, and on the Thursday he was told so. As he made a difficulty about taking the sacrament from the Protestant Bishop of Bath, the Duke of York got all who were present away from the bed, and asked his brother, in a whisper, if he should send for a Catholic priest ? The King replied, "For God's sake, brother, do !" The Duke smuggled in, up the

back stairs, disguised in a wig and gown, a priest named HUDDLESTON, who had saved the King's life after the battle of Worcester: telling him that this worthy man in the wig had once saved his body, and was now come to save his soul.

The Merry Monarch lived through that night, and died before noon on the next day, which was Friday, the sixth. Two of the last things he said were of a human sort, and your remembrance will give him the full benefit of them. When the Queen sent to say she was too unwell to attend him and to ask his pardon, he said, "Alas! poor woman, *she* beg *my* pardon! I beg hers with all my heart. Take back that answer to her." And he also said, in reference to Nell Gwyn, "Do not let poor Nelly starve."

He died in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his reign.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ENGLAND UNDER JAMES THE SECOND.

KING JAMES THE SECOND was a man so very disagreeable, that even the best of historians has favoured his brother Charles, as becoming, by comparison, quite a pleasant character. The one object of his short reign was to re-establish the Catholic religion in England; and this he doggedly pursued with such a stupid obstinacy, that his career very soon came to a close.

The first thing he did, was, to assure his council that he would make it his endeavour to preserve the Government, both in Church and State, as it was by law established; and that he would always take care to defend and support the Church. Great public acclamations were raised over this fair speech, and a great deal was said, from the pulpits and elsewhere, about the word of a King which was never broken, by credulous people who little supposed that he had formed a secret council for Catholic affairs, of which a mischievous Jesuit, called FATHER PETRE, was one of the chief members. With tears of joy in his eyes, he received, as the beginning of *his* pension from the King of France, five hundred thousand livres; yet, with a mixture of meanness and arrogance that belonged to his contemptible character, he was always jealous of

making some show of being independent of the King of France, while he pocketed his money. As—notwithstanding his publishing two papers in favour of Popery (and not likely to do it much service, I should think) written by the King, his brother, and found in his strong-box; and his open display of himself attending mass—the Parliament was very obsequious, and granted him a large sum of money, he began his reign with a belief that he could do what he pleased, and with a determination to do it.

Before we proceed to its principal events, let us dispose of Titus Oates. He was tried for perjury, a fortnight after the coronation, and besides being very heavily fined, was sentenced to stand twice in the pillory, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate one day, and from Newgate to Tyburn two days afterwards, and to stand in the pillory five times a year as long as he lived. This fearful sentence was actually inflicted on the rascal. Being unable to stand after his first flogging, he was dragged on a sledge from Newgate to Tyburn, and flogged as he was drawn along. He was so strong a villain that he did not die under the torture, but lived to be afterwards pardoned and rewarded, though not to be ever believed in any more. Dangerfield, the only other one of that crew left alive, was not so fortunate. He was almost killed by a whipping from Newgate to Tyburn, and, as if that were not punishment enough, a ferocious barrister of Gray's Inn gave him a poke in the eye with his cane, which caused his death; for which the ferocious barrister was deservedly tried and executed.

As soon as James was on the throne, Argyle and Monmouth went from Brussels to Rotterdam, and attended a meeting of Scottish exiles held there, to concert measures for a rising in England. It was agreed that Argyle should effect a landing in Scotland, and Monmouth in England; and that two Englishmen should be sent with Argyle to be in his confidence, and two Scotchmen with the Duke of Monmouth.

Argyle was the first to act upon this contract. But, two of his men being taken prisoners at the Orkney Islands, the Government became aware of his intention, and was able to act against him with such vigour as to prevent his raising more than two or three thousand Highlanders, although he sent a fiery cross, by trusty messengers, from clan to clan and from glen to glen, as the custom then was when those wild people were to be excited by their chiefs. As he was moving towards Glasgow with his small force, he was betrayed by some of his followers, taken, and

carried, with his hands tied behind his back, to his old prison in Edinburgh Castle. James ordered him to be executed, on his old shamefully unjust sentence, within three days; and he appears to have been anxious that his legs should have been pounded with his old favourite the boot. However, the boot was not applied; he was simply beheaded, and his head was set upon the top of Edinburgh Jail. One of those Englishmen who had been assigned to him was that old soldier Rumbold, the master of the Rye House. He was sorely wounded, and within a week after Argyle had suffered with great courage, was brought up for trial, lest he should die and disappoint the King. He, too, was executed, after defending himself with great spirit, and saying that he did not believe that God had made the greater part of mankind to carry saddles on their backs and bridles in their mouths, and to be ridden by a few, booted and spurred for the purpose—in which I thoroughly agree with Rumbold.

The Duke of Monmouth, partly through being detained and partly through idling his time away, was five or six weeks behind his friend when he landed at Lyme, in Dorset: having at his right hand an unlucky nobleman called LORD GREY OF WERK, who of himself would have ruined a far more promising expedition. He immediately set up his standard in the market-place, and proclaimed the King a tyrant, and a Popish usurper, and I know not what else; charging him not only with what he had done, which was bad enough, but with what neither he nor anybody else had done, such as setting fire to London, and poisoning the late King. Raising some four thousand men by these means, he marched on to Taunton, where there were many Protestant dissenters who were strongly opposed to the Catholics. Here, both the rich and poor turned out to receive him, ladies waved a welcome to him from all the windows as he passed along the streets, flowers were strewn in his way, and every compliment and honour that could be devised was showered upon him. Among the rest, twenty young ladies came forward, in their best clothes, and in their brightest beauty, and gave him a Bible ornamented with their own fair hands, together with other presents.

Encouraged by this homage, he proclaimed himself King, and went on to Bridgewater. But, here the Government troops, under the EARL OF FEVERSHAM, were close at hand; and he was so dispirited at finding that he made but few powerful friends after all, that it was a question whether he should disband his army and endea-

avour to escape. It was resolved, at the instance of that unlucky Lord Grey, to make a night attack on the King's army, as it lay encamped on the edge of a morass called Sedgemoor. The horsemen were commanded by the same unlucky lord, who was not a brave man. He gave up the battle almost at the first obstacle—which was a deep drain; and although the poor countrymen, who had turned out for Monmouth, fought bravely with scythes, poles, pitchforks, and such poor weapons as they had, they were soon dispersed by the trained soldiers, and fled in all directions. When the Duke of Monmouth himself fled, was not known in the confusion; but the unlucky Lord Grey was taken early next day, and then another of the party was taken, who confessed that he had parted from the Duke only four hours before. Strict search being made, he was found disguised as a peasant, hidden in a ditch under fern and nettles, with a few peas in his pocket which he had gathered in the fields to eat. The only other articles he had upon him were a few papers and little books: one of the latter being a strange jumble, in his own writing, of charms, songs, recipes, and prayers. He was completely broken. He wrote a miserable letter to the King, beseeching and entreating to be allowed to see him. When he was taken to London, and conveyed bound into the King's presence, he crawled to him on his knees, and made a most degrading exhibition. As James never forgave or relented towards anybody, he was not likely to soften towards the issuer of the Lyme proclamation, so he told the suppliant to prepare for death.

On the fifteenth of July, one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, this unfortunate favourite of the people was brought out to die on Tower Hill. The crowd was immense, and the tops of all the houses were covered with gazers. He had seen his wife, the daughter of the Duke of Buccleuch, in the Tower, and had talked much of a lady whom he loved far better—the LADY HARRIET WENTWORTH—who was one of the last persons he remembered in this life. Before laying down his head upon the block he felt the edge of the axe, and told the executioner that he feared it was not sharp enough, and that the axe was not heavy enough. On the executioner replying that it was of the proper kind, the Duke said, "I pray you have a care, and do not use me so awkwardly as you used my Lord Russell." The executioner, made nervous by this, and trembling, struck once and merely gashed him in the neck. Upon this, the Duke of Monmouth raised his head and looked the

man reproachfully in the face. Then he struck twice, and then thrice, and then threw down the axe, and cried out in a voice of horror that he could not finish that work. The sheriffs, however, threatening him with what should be done to himself if he did not, he took it up again and struck a fourth time and a fifth time. Then the wretched head at last fell off, and James, Duke of Monmouth, was dead, in the thirty-sixth year of his age. He was a showy graceful man, with many popular qualities, and had found much favour in the open hearts of the English.

The atrocities, committed by the Government, which followed this Monmouth rebellion, form the blackest and most lamentable page in English history. The poor peasants, having been dispersed with great loss, and their leaders having been taken, one would think that the implacable King might have been satisfied. But no; he let loose upon them, among other intolerable monsters, a COLONEL KIRK, who had served against the Moors, and whose soldiers—called by the people Kirk's lambs, because they bore a lamb upon their flag, as the emblem of Christianity—were worthy of their leader. The atrocities committed by these demons in human shape are far too horrible to be related here. It is enough to say, that besides most ruthlessly murdering and robbing them, and ruining them by making them buy their pardons at the price of all they possessed, it was one of Kirk's favourite amusements, as he and his officers sat drinking after dinner, and toasting the King, to have batches of prisoners hanged outside the windows for the company's diversion; and that when their feet quivered in the convulsions of death, he used to swear that they should have music to their dancing, and would order the drums to beat and the trumpets to play. The detestable King informed him, as an acknowledgment of these services, that he was "very well satisfied with his proceedings." But the King's great delight was in the proceedings of Jeffreys, now a peer, who went down into the west, with four other judges, to try persons accused of having had any share in the rebellion. The King pleasantly called this "Jeffreys's campaign." The people down in that part of the country remember it to this day as *The Bloody Assize*.

It began at Winchester, where a poor deaf old lady, MRS. ALICIA LISLE, the widow of one of the judges of Charles the First (who had been murdered abroad by some Royalist assassins), was charged with having given shelter in her house to two fugitives from Sedgemoor. Three

times the jury refused to find her guilty, until Jeffreys bullied and frightened them into that false verdict. When he had extorted it from them, he said, "Gentlemen, if I had been one of you, and she had been my own mother, I would have found her guilty;"—as I dare say he would. He sentenced her to be burned alive, that very afternoon. The clergy of the cathedral and some others interfered in her favour, and she was beheaded within a week. As a high mark of his approbation, the King made Jeffreys Lord Chancellor; and he then went on to Dorchester, to Exeter, to Taunton, and to Wells. It is astonishing, when we read of the enormous injustice and barbarity of this beast, to know that no one struck him dead on the judgment-seat. It was enough for any man or woman to be accused by an enemy, before Jeffreys, to be found guilty of high treason. One man who pleaded not guilty, he ordered to be taken out of court upon the instant, and hanged; and this so terrified the prisoners in general that they mostly pleaded guilty at once. At Dorchester alone, in the course of a few days, Jeffreys hanged eighty people; besides whipping, transporting, imprisoning, and selling as slaves, great numbers. He executed, in all, two hundred and fifty, or three hundred.

These executions took place, among the neighbours and friends of the sentenced, in thirty-six towns and villages. Their bodies were mangled, steeped in caldrons of boiling pitch and tar, and hung up by the roadsides, in the streets, over the very churches. The sight and smell of heads and limbs, the hissing and bubbling of the infernal caldrons, and the tears and terrors of the people, were dreadful beyond all description. One rustic, who was forced to steep the remains in the black pot, was ever afterwards called "*Tom Boilman*." The hangman has ever since been called *Jack Ketch*, because a man of that name went hanging and hanging, all day long, in the train of Jeffreys. You will hear much of the horrors of the great French Revolution. Many and terrible they were, there is no doubt; but I know of nothing worse, done by the maddened people of France in that awful time, than was done by the highest judge in England, with the express approval of the King of England, in *The Bloody Assize*.

Nor was even this all. Jeffreys was as fond of money for himself as of misery for others, and he sold pardons wholesale to fill his pockets. The King ordered, at one time, a thousand prisoners to be given to certain of his

favourites, in order that they might bargain with them for their pardons. The young ladies of Taunton who had presented the Bible, were bestowed upon the maids of honour at court; and those precious ladies made very hard bargains with them indeed. When The Bloody Assize was at its most dismal height, the King was diverting himself with horse-races in the very place where Mrs. Lisle had been executed. When Jeffreys had done his worst, and came home again, he was particularly complimented in the Royal Gazette; and when the King heard that through drunkenness and raging he was very ill, his odious Majesty remarked that such another man could not easily be found in England. Besides all this, a former sheriff of London, named CORNISH, was hanged within sight of his own house, after an abominably conducted trial, for having had a share in the Rye House Plot, on evidence given by Rumsey, which that villain was obliged to confess was directly opposed to the evidence he had given on the trial of Lord Russell. And on the very same day, a worthy widow, named ELIZABETH GAUNT, was burned alive at Tyburn, for having sheltered a wretch who himself gave evidence against her. She settled the fuel about herself with her own hands, so that the flames should reach her quickly; and nobly said, with her last breath, that she had obeyed the sacred command of God, to give refuge to the outcast, and not to betray the wanderer.

After all this hanging, beheading, burning, boiling, mutilating, exposing, robbing, transporting, and selling into slavery, of his unhappy subjects, the King not unnaturally thought that he could do whatever he would. So, he went to work to change the religion of the country with all possible speed; and what he did was this.

He first of all tried to get rid of what was called the Test Act—which prevented the Catholics from holding public employments—by his own power of dispensing with the penalties. He tried it in one case, and, eleven of the twelve judges deciding in his favour, he exercised it in three others, being those of three dignitaries of University College, Oxford, who had become Papists, and whom he kept in their places and sanctioned. He revived the hated Ecclesiastical Commission, to get rid of COMPTON, Bishop of London, who manfully opposed him. He solicited the Pope to favour England with an ambassador, which the Pope (who was a sensible man then) rather unwillingly did. He flourished Father Petre before the eyes of the people on all possible occasions. He

favoured the establishment of convents in several parts of London. He was delighted to have the streets, and even the court itself, filled with Monks and Friars in the habits of their orders. He constantly endeavoured to make Catholics of the Protestants about him. He held private interviews, which he called "closetings," with those Members of Parliament who held offices, to persuade them to consent to the design he had in view. When they did not consent, they were removed, or resigned of themselves, and their places were given to Catholics. He displaced Protestant officers from the army, by every means in his power, and got Catholics into their places too. He tried the same thing with the corporations, and also (though not so successfully) with the Lord Lieutenants of counties. To terrify the people into the endurance of all these measures, he kept an army of fifteen thousand men encamped on Hounslow Heath, where mass was openly performed in the General's tent, and where priests went among the soldiers endeavouring to persuade them to become Catholics. For circulating a paper among those men advising them to be true to their religion, a Protestant clergyman, named JOHNSON, the chaplain of the late Lord Russell, was actually sentenced to stand three times in the pillory, and was actually whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. He dismissed his own brother-in-law from his Council because he was a Protestant, and made a Privy Councillor of the before-mentioned Father Petre. He handed Ireland over to RICHARD TALBOT, EARL OF TYRCONNELL, a worthless, dissolute knave, who played the same game there for his master, and who played the deeper game for himself of one day putting it under the protection of the French King. In going to these extremities, every man of sense and judgment among the Catholics, from the Pope to a porter, knew that the King was a mere bigoted fool, who would undo himself and the cause he sought to advance; but he was deaf to all reason, and, happily for England ever afterwards, went tumbling off his throne in his own blind way.

A spirit began to arise in the country, which the besotted blunderer little expected. He first found it out in the University of Cambridge. Having made a Catholic, a dean, at Oxford, without any opposition, he tried to make a monk a master of arts at Cambridge: which attempt the University resisted, and defeated him. He then went back to his favourite Oxford. On the death of the President of Magdalen College, he commanded that there should be elected to

succeed him, one MR. ANTHONY FARMER, whose only recommendation was, that he was of the King's religion. The University plucked up courage at last, and refused. The King substituted another man, and it still refused, resolving to stand by its own election of a MR. HOUGH. The dull tyrant, upon this, punished Mr. Hough, and five-and-twenty more, by causing them to be expelled and declared incapable of holding any church preferment; then he proceeded to what he supposed to be his highest step, but to what was, in fact, his last plunge head-foremost in his tumble off his throne.

He had issued a declaration that there should be no religious tests or penal laws, in order to let in the Catholics more easily; but the Protestant dissenters, unmindful of themselves, had gallantly joined the regular church in opposing it tooth and nail. The King and Father Petre now resolved to have this read, on a certain Sunday, in all the churches, and to order it to be circulated for that purpose by the bishops. The latter took counsel with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was in disgrace; and they resolved that the declaration should not be read, and that they would petition the King against it. The Archbishop himself wrote out the petition, and six bishops went into the King's bed-chamber the same night to present it, to his infinite astonishment. Next day was the Sunday fixed for the reading, and it was only read by two hundred clergymen out of ten thousand. The King resolved against all advice to prosecute the bishops in the Court of King's Bench, and within three weeks they were summoned before the Privy Council, and committed to the Tower. As the six bishops were taken to that dismal place, by water, the people who were assembled in immense numbers fell upon their knees, and wept for them, and prayed for them. When they got to the Tower, the officers and soldiers on guard besought them for their blessing. While they were confined there, the soldiers every day drank to their release with loud shouts. When they were brought up to the Court of King's Bench for their trial, which the Attorney-General said was for the high offence of censuring the Government, and giving their opinion about affairs of state, they were attended by similar multitudes, and surrounded by a throng of noblemen and gentlemen. When the jury went out at seven o'clock at night to consider of their verdict, everybody (except the King) knew that they would rather starve than yield to the King's brewer, who was one of them, and wanted a verdict for his customer. When they came into court next morning, after resisting the

brewer all night, and gave a verdict of not guilty, such a shout rose up in Westminster Hall as it had never heard before; and it was passed on among the people away to Temple Bar, and away again to the Tower. It did not pass only to the east, but passed to the west too, until it reached the camp at Hounslow, where the fifteen thousand soldiers took it up and echoed it. And still, when the dull King, who was then with Lord Feversham, heard the mighty roar, asked in alarm what it was, and was told that it was "nothing but the acquittal of the bishops," he said, in his dogged way, "Call you that nothing? It is so much the worse for them."

Between the petition and the trial, the Queen had given birth to a son, which Father Petre rather thought was owing to Saint Winifred. But I doubt if Saint Winifred had much to do with it as the King's friend, inasmuch as the entirely new prospect of a Catholic successor (for both the King's daughters were Protestants) determined the EARLS OF SHREWSBURY, DANBY, and DEVONSHIRE, LORD LUMLEY, the BISHOP OF LONDON, ADMIRAL RUSSELL, and COLONEL SIDNEY, to invite the Prince of Orange over to England. The Royal Mole, seeing his danger at last, made, in his fright, many great concessions, besides raising an army of forty thousand men; but the Prince of Orange was not a man for James the Second to cope with. His preparations were extraordinarily vigorous, and his mind was resolved.

For a fortnight after the Prince was ready to sail for England, a great wind from the west prevented the departure of his fleet. Even when the wind lulled, and it did sail, it was dispersed by a storm, and was obliged to put back to refit. At last, on the first of November, one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight, the Protestant east wind, as it was long called, began to blow; and on the third, the people of Dover and the people of Calais saw a fleet twenty miles long sailing gallantly by, between the two places. On Monday, the fifth, it anchored at Torbay in Devonshire, and the Prince, with a splendid retinue of officers and men, marched into Exeter. But the people in that western part of the country had suffered so much in The Bloody Assize, that they had lost heart. Few people joined him; and he began to think of returning, and publishing the invitation he had received from those lords, as his justification for having come at all. At this crisis, some of the gentry joined him; the Royal army began to falter; an engagement was signed, by which all who set their hand to it declared that they would support one another in defence of the

laws and liberties of the three Kingdoms, of the Protestant religion, and of the Prince of Orange. From that time, the cause received no check; the greatest towns in England began, one after another, to declare for the Prince; and he knew that it was all safe with him when the University of Oxford offered to melt down its plate, if he wanted any money.

By this time the King was running about in a pitiable way, touching people for the King's evil in one place, reviewing his troops in another, and bleeding from the nose in a third. The young Prince was sent to Portsmouth, Father Petre went off like a shot to France, and there was a general and swift dispersal of all the priests and friars. One after another, the King's most important officers and friends deserted him and went over to the Prince. In the night, his daughter Anne fled from Whitehall Palace; and the Bishop of London, who had once been a soldier, rode before her with a drawn sword in his hand, and pistols at his saddle. "God help me," cried the miserable King: "my very children have forsaken me!" In his wildness, after debating with such lords as were in London, whether he should or should not call a Parliament, and after naming three of them to negotiate with the Prince, he resolved to fly to France. He had the little Prince of Wales brought back from Portsmouth; and the child and the Queen crossed the river to Lambeth in an open boat, on a miserable wet night, and got safely away. This was on the night of the ninth of December.

At one o'clock on the morning of the eleventh, the King, who had, in the meantime, received a letter from the Prince of Orange, stating his objects, got out of bed, told LORD NORTHUMBERLAND who lay in his room, not to open the door until the usual hour in the morning, and went down the back stairs (the same, I suppose, by which the priest in the wig and gown had come up to his brother) and crossed the river in a small boat: sinking the great seal of England by the way. Horses having been provided, he rode, accompanied by SIR EDWARD HALES, to Feversham, where he embarked in a Custom House Hoy. The master of this Hoy, wanting more ballast, ran into the Isle of Sheppy to get it, where the fishermen and smugglers crowded about the boat, and informed the King of their suspicions that he was a "hatchet-faced Jesuit." As they took his money and would not let him go, he told them who he was, and that the Prince of Orange wanted to take his life; and he began to scream for a boat—and then to cry, because he had lost a piece of wood

on his ride which he called a fragment of Our Saviour's cross. He put himself into the hands of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and his detention was made known to the Prince of Orange at Windsor—who, only wanting to get rid of him, and not caring where he went, so that he went away, was very much disconcerted that they did not let him go. However, there was nothing for it but to have him brought back, with some state in the way of Life Guards, to Whitehall. And as soon as he got there, in his infatuation, he heard mass, and set a Jesuit to say grace at his public dinner.

The people had been thrown into the strangest state of confusion by his flight, and had taken it into their heads that the Irish part of the army were going to murder the Protestants. Therefore, they set the bells a ringing, and lighted watch-fires, and burned Catholic Chapels, and looked about in all directions for Father Petre and the Jesuits, while the Pope's ambassador was running away in the dress of a footman. They found no Jesuits; but a man, who had once been a frightened witness before Jeffreys in court, saw a swollen drunken face looking through a window down at Wapping, which he well remembered. The face was in a sailor's dress, but he knew it to be the face of that accursed Judge, and he seized him. The people, to their lasting honour, did not tear him to pieces. After knocking him about a little, they took him, in the basest agonies of terror, to the Lord Mayor, who sent him, at his own shrieking petition, to the Tower for safety. There, he died.

Their bewilderment continuing, the people now lighted bonfires and made rejoicings, as if they had any reason to be glad to have the King back again. But, his stay was very short, for the English guards were removed from Whitehall, Dutch guards were marched up to it, and he was told by one of his late ministers that the Prince would enter London next day, and he had better go to Ham. He said, Ham was a cold damp place, and he would rather go to Rochester. He thought himself very cunning in this, as he meant to escape from Rochester to France. The Prince of Orange and his friends knew that, perfectly well, and desired nothing more. So, he went to Gravesend, in his royal barge, attended by certain lords, and watched by Dutch troops, and pitied by the generous people, who were far more forgiving than he had ever been, when they saw him in his humiliation. On the night of the twenty-third of December, not even then understanding that everybody wanted to get rid of

him, he went out, absurdly, through his Rochester garden, down to the Medway, and got away to France, where he rejoined the Queen.

There had been a council in his absence, of the lords, and the authorities of London. When the Prince came, on the day after the King's departure, he summoned the Lords to meet him, and soon afterwards, all those who had served in any of the Parliaments of King Charles the Second. It was finally resolved by these authorities that the throne was vacant by the conduct of King James the Second; that it was inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom, to be governed by a Popish prince; that the Prince and Princess of Orange should be King and Queen during their lives and the life of the survivor of them; and that their children should succeed them, if they had any. That if they had none, the Princess Anne and her children should succeed; that if she had none, the heirs of the Prince of Orange should succeed.

On the thirteenth of January, one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine, the Prince and Princess, sitting on a throne in Whitehall, bound themselves to these conditions. The Protestant religion was established in England, and England's great and glorious Revolution was complete.

CHAPTER XXXVII.



HAVE now arrived at the close of my little history. The events which succeeded the famous Revolution of one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight, would neither be easily related nor easily understood in such a book as this.

William and Mary reigned together, five years. After the death of his good wife, William occupied the throne, alone, for seven years longer. During his reign, on the sixteenth of September, one thousand seven hundred and one, the poor weak creature who had once been James the Second of England, died in France. In the meantime he had done his utmost (which was not much) to cause William to be assassinated, and to regain his lost dominions. James's son was declared, by the French King, the rightful King of England; and was called in France THE CHEVALIER SAINT GEORGE, and in England THE PRETENDER. Some infatuated people in England, and particularly in Scotland,

took up the Pretender's cause from time to time—as if the country had not had Stuarts enough!—and many lives were sacrificed, and much misery was occasioned. King William died on Sunday, the seventh of March, one thousand seven hundred and two, of the consequences of an accident occasioned by his horse stumbling with him. He was always a brave patriotic Prince, and a man of remarkable abilities. His manner was cold, and he made but few friends; but he had truly loved his queen. When he was dead, a lock of her hair, in a ring, was found tied with a black ribbon round his left arm.

He was succeeded by the PRINCESS ANNE, a popular Queen, who reigned twelve years. In her reign, in the month of May, one thousand seven hundred and seven, the Union between England and Scotland was effected, and the two countries were incorporated under the name of GREAT BRITAIN. Then, from the year one thousand seven hundred and fourteen to the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty, reigned the four GEORGES.

It was in the reign of George the Second, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, that the Pretender did his last mischief, and made his last appearance. Being an old man by that time, he and the Jacobites—as his friends were called—put forward his son, CHARLES EDWARD, known as the Young Chevalier. The Highlanders of Scotland, an extremely troublesome and wrong-headed race on the subject of the Stuarts, espoused his cause, and he joined them, and there was a Scottish rebellion to make him king, in which many gallant and devoted gentlemen lost their lives. It was a hard matter for Charles Edward to escape abroad again, with a high price on his head; but the Scottish people were extraordinarily faithful to him, and, after undergoing many romantic adventures, not unlike those of Charles the Second, he escaped to France. A number of charming stories and delightful songs arose out of the Jacobite feelings, and belong to the Jacobite times. Otherwise I think the Stuarts were a public nuisance altogether.

It was in the reign of George the Third that England lost North America, by persisting in taxing her without her own consent. That immense country, made independent under WASHINGTON, and left to itself, became the United States; one of the greatest nations of the earth. In these times in which I write, it is honourably remarkable for protecting its subjects, wherever they may travel, with a dignity and a determination which is a model for England. Between

you and me, England has rather lost ground in this respect since the days of Oliver Cromwell.

The Union of Great Britain with Ireland—which had been getting on very ill by itself—took place in the reign of George the Third, on the second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight.

WILLIAM THE FOURTH succeeded George the Fourth, in the year one thousand eight hundred

and thirty, and reigned seven years. QUEEN VICTORIA, his niece, the only child of the Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George the Third, came to the throne on the twentieth of June, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven. She was married to PRINCE ALBERT of Saxe Gotha on the tenth of February, one thousand eight hundred and forty. She is very good, and much beloved. So I end, like the crier, with

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!



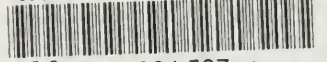
CHARLES THE FIRST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS CHILDREN.







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